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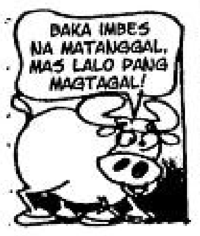
Closing birdie hands Birdie US Open plum

Lawyer files impeachment rap, but no takers in House


BAKA IMBES NA MATANGGAL, MAS LALO PANG MAGTAGAL!

By Philip C. Tubeza

LAWYER Oliver Lozano is at it again.

Lozano yesterday filed an impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo in the

LAWYER/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Experts say impeachment move remains a long shot

By Norman Bordadora

LEGAL luminaries believe any move to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo based on the controversial wiretap remains a long shot despite her revelations last night.

Constitutionalist Fr. Joaquin Bernas, one of the experts invited by the House investiga-

EXPERTS / A4

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GMA: HELLO... IT'S ME

She apologizes for 'lapse in judgment,' denies rigging polls

By Christine O. Avendaño

IN AN UNPRECEDENTED act of public contrition, President Macapagal-Arroyo last night admitted it was she who was talking in wiretapped phone conversations about an alleged conspiracy to tamper with the results of the 2004 elections.

"I'm sorry ... I ask you to forgive me," Ms Arroyo said in a televised address to the nation.

Finally caving in to demands for her to speak out about the politically explosive tape, Ms Arroyo broke her 22-day silence and told the nation that what she had done was a "lapse in judgment" and that she was taking full responsibility.

But she indicated in her televised address that she had no intention of resigning, amid demands from her severest critics that she step down and give way to snap elections. *(Full text of message on Page A6.)*

As she spoke, Ms Arroyo looked subdued—if not contrite.

Gone was the petulant air which many among the public had come to associate with her in some of her past public appearances.

But she insisted she had won the presidential election and that the call she made to a Commission on Elections official in no way influenced the results of last year's polls.

"I recognize that making any such call was a lapse in judgment," Ms Arroyo said in her television appearance lasting a little over 10 minutes. "I'm sorry."

"I also regret taking so long to speak before you on this matter. I take full responsibility for my actions and to you and to all those good citizens who may have had their faith shaken by these events, I want to assure you that I have redoubled my efforts to serve the nation and earn your trust."

Briefly shifting to Filipino, Ms Arroyo said: "*Pinagsisihan ko ito nang lubos* (I fully regret this)."

She appealed for an end to the political conflict that had rent the country and threatened her grip on the presidency.

"Nothing should stand in the way of ... the next phase of my reform agenda," she said. "That is why I want to close this chapter and move on with the business of governing."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said that from the start Ms Arroyo had wanted to speak out on the issue.

"But her counsel advised her to take her time," Bunye said. He said retired Justice Jose Vitug acted as lead counsel for Ms Arroyo and was the one who guided her on her statement.

She only decided on speaking out over the weekend, Bunye said.

GMA/ A6

PCPO/MALACAÑANG

A CONTRITE look on her face was what Filipinos saw on television last night when President Macapagal-Arroyo told the nation that hers was the voice on the controversial tape.

CONTROVERSIAL PORTIONS OF GMA-GARCI TAPE

(FOLLOWING are excerpts from a controversial tape of supposed phone conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano dealing with the 2004 elections. The excerpts were transcribed by the PDI Research Department from a tape released by lawyer Alan Paguia, a former counsel of ousted President Joseph Estrada. They bear apparent similarities with conversations in several other tape transcripts that have been circulating for the past three weeks.)

Female voice: The FPJ camp *raw* (unintelligible) *sa* Board of Canvassers of *ano, dun sa Marawi*, and the military?

Male: *Ano ma'am?*

Female: A, the FPJ camp *raw* ...

Male: U-huh?

Female: ... will *ano*, will file case against the Board of Canvassers and the military in Marawi?

Male: *Hindi naman ho siguro nila maaano ang ating* Board of Canvassers, *pero ang* military *kasi ... Sa kanila si* Gudani. I do not know if they will find ... *Sa kanila si Gudani*, ma'am, that's why we had, I had to work with General Espero? and General Kiamco? ... *na* as of time, *pinalitan namin si* Gudani for a while.

CONTROVERSIAL/ A6

Right move, say GMA allies; half-truths, say foes

FORMER President Corazon Aquino welcomed President Macapagal-Arroyo's apology, but reactions by politicians predictably followed strictly partisan lines. Independent analysts called it a blunder likely to fuel tensions.

"I am glad the President has broken her silence," Aquino said in a statement. "Her admission of judgmental lapses leading to improper conduct on her part is a truly welcome development," she said.

"Tonight, the President has made a strong beginning and I hope she will continue in the direction of better and more responsive governance. Let us pray for her and for all of us Filipinos," she said.

"It is unprecedented for a President to ask for forgiveness," said Loida Nicolas Lewis, chair and CEO of the New York-based National Federation of American-Filipino Association, reflecting the general civilian mood. "The Philippines is entering the promised land. Healing should begin."

"What she did is right. She apologized to the people. That is a mark of a true leader," said Senate President Franklin Drilon. "Concrete actions must now be undertaken if government must win back the confidence of the people."

Drilon urged Ms Arroyo to undertake reforms that would curb corruption and reorganize her government.

"The crisis is now over because the petite lady had sung. After her mea culpa, we must now all move on ... Let the process of national healing, which truth and humility made possible, begin," said Sen. Ralph Recto.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said Ms Arroyo gave nothing but "half-truths. She had lost her credibility. Without it, it would be difficult for her to govern."

Pimentel repeated his call for Ms Arroyo to resign and call a snap election.

"Now that she has authenticated the tape, she must vacate," said Sen. Panfilo Lacson. He said it was clear from the wiretap that then Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was "proposing means of electoral fraud and she was not doing anything about it ... Now is the time to call for her resignation."

RIGHT / A4

STUDENTS wait outside the Manila Cathedral for their turn to view the remains of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin. The influential Catholic Church leader will be buried today.

REM ZAMORA

People still seek out Sin for hope, even after death

By Christian V. Esguerra

EVEN after the death of Jaime Cardinal Sin, Filipinos still look to him for hope and guidance, especially in these troubled times.

Dedication boards at the late prelate's wake at the Manila Cathedral were filled with messages left by people from all walks of life.

"Thank you for providing us leadership and enlightenment during troubled times," said one message which seemed to encapsulate the sentiments and wishes of the mourners. "Please pray always for our troubled land."

"I know you are now in God's hand. Intercede for us all," wrote another well-wisher.

"Now that you're with the Lord, please ask Him to continue to bless the whole world, especially the Philippines and the Filipino people," scribbled another.

Similar messages filled at least two huge poster boards displayed at the entrance of the cathedral.

Sin had received the same requests throughout his 30-year archbishopric in the influential See of Manila.

The requests started pouring in soon after he got his appointment in 1974, just two years after martial law was imposed.

Initially maintaining what he called a "critical collaboration" with Ferdinand Marcos, Sin soon unleashed scathing criticisms of human rights abuses under the martial law regime.

PEOPLE/ A4

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with rainshowers and thunderstorms. Light to moderate winds blowing from the south and southeast will prevail throughout the archipelago.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/06/28/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Second FRONT PAGE

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Cruz 'loses' witness; Villar may lose post

By Christian V. Esguerra and Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE "JUETENG" issue took yet another twist yesterday, two days before the next Senate hearing.

Make that two twists. Archbishop Oscar Cruz said he had lost the "best" of his eight witnesses, while the opposition claimed the Senate presidency was itself at stake in the decision whether or not to continue with the Senate probe.

The term-sharing agreement between Senate President Franklin Drilon and Sen. Manuel Villar was in peril, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said yesterday, because Drilon was pushing for an end to the Senate probe.

Cruz, who helped revive the jueteng payola issue, told reporters his witness would have explained how contributions from a known jueteng lord had helped fund Ms Arroyo's vice presidential and presidential campaigns.

"He had direct information about the transactions," Cruz said.

The witness is a "cabalen" (provincemate) of the President's and a member of her Cabinet, the INQUIRER has learned.

But after nearly a month of negotiations, Cruz, head of Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, said he found the witness "very untenable."

"I thought he was the best but we found out later that he was not tenable," he said. "He simply had too [much baggage] so he could not speak [out] clearly. If he told all, he would have just sunk himself deeper."

Cruz said it was also possible the witness preferred to keep silent so he could receive "more graces" from Malacañang.

But the Lingayen-Dagupan prelate said he still had one more witness who could link the "Office of the President" to the P13-billion underground lottery system.

He described the new witness as a jueteng "liaison officer, bagman and operator all rolled into one."

On the spot

Pimentel said Drilon's move to end the jueteng investigation that had implicated members of the President's family had placed Villar on the spot and his right to assume the Senate presidency in peril.

"If Manny defies Drilon, their deal on the term sharing of the Senate presidency might be junked. If he obeys, he would be seen as a jellyfish," Pimentel said.

Villar is supposed to assume Drilon's post in January next year in accordance with an agreement they forged in 2004.

Approved by the 14-member majority bloc, the gentleman's agreement allowed Drilon to lead the Senate for the first one-and-a-half years of the three-year term of the 13th Congress.

Drilon on Sunday said he would ask Villar and Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid to wrap up the jueteng probe for lack of credible witnesses against Ms Arroyo and members of her family. Villar and Lapid chair the committees on public order and on games, respectively, which are conducting the joint investigation.

The two took different positions, with Lapid agreeing to the termination and Villar saying the investigation will continue.

Villar yesterday issued a statement setting the next hearing for Thursday. He said this would end speculation that the Senate would terminate the hearings.

"It's difficult to say when it will be over or finished because there are witnesses who are being presented to us. It will depend on the outcome of the next hearing. From there, we can decide on whether we would agree to the suggestions of other senators to terminate the jueteng hearing," Villar said.

Judge blocks DOJ investigation of Ong

By Tina G. Santos and Margaux C. Ortiz

THE EXECUTIVE judge of the Manila Regional Trial Court yesterday issued a 72-hour temporary restraining order (TRO) prohibiting the Department of Justice from conducting a preliminary investigation of the inciting to sedition charge filed against Samuel Ong, former deputy director of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Ong had claimed that he had the "mother of all tapes" of the conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano in which the President purportedly ordered the rigging of the presidential election in 2004.

Respondents Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño had scheduled the initial hearing for the preliminary investigation yesterday afternoon.

A lawyer of Ong described the TRO as unexpected.

"We thank God we were able to obtain a TRO considering it was a long shot for us," Liwayway Vinzons-Chato told reporters during a forum at De La Salle University in Manila.

"We were hoping that we would able to establish that Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez cannot handle this case objectively because he has been biased from the start," Chato said.

Chato said Gonzalez had been making "biased pronouncements" like Ong being the subject of a warrantless arrest after allegedly committing a continuing offense. "All his announcements have no basis and are contrary to law," she said.

In his order, Judge Antonio Eugenio said: "While as a rule, the prosecution in a criminal offense cannot be the subject of prohibition and injunction, in extreme cases, however, to afford adequate protection to constitutional rights, the Supreme Court has recognized the resort to the extraordinary writs of prohibition and injunction."

TAYO AWARDS
President Macapagal-Arroyo poses with judges Sen. Francis Pangilinan (to her left) and Paolo Benigno Aquino IV (behind to her right) and representatives of the winners of the Ten Accomplished Youth Organization (TAYO) awards at Malacañang. The winners were Benguet State University–Development Communication Society; University of the Philippines Visayas–Junior Philippine Institute of Accountants; Beehive 4-H Club; Kanlungan–Kilusan Para sa Kalikasan; Western Visayas State University–Political Science Students Organization; Sining Bulakenyo–Pangkat Mananayaw ng Bulacan; Young Artists Fellowship for the Environment; Mindanao Polytechnic State College–State College Mathematics Society; Save Mindanao Volunteers Inc., and Kabataang Gabay ng Bayan. PCPO MALACAÑANG

Romulo says 'old friends' back GMA

By Nikko Dizon

FOREIGN Secretary Alberto Romulo said key US lawmakers and the World Bank president, who are "old friends" of the Philippines, had expressed support for the economic and fiscal reforms implemented by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"There is a lot of confidence in our leadership and governance. They have seen our willingness and sincerity in pursuing economic and fiscal reforms. They have seen our commitment to democracy and our determination to succeed. They want to support our efforts toward further success," Romulo said in a statement released by the Department of Foreign Affairs following his separate meetings with four influential American lawmakers.

They were Sen. Thad Cochran (Republican-Miss.), the chair of the Senate appropriations committee; Senators Diane Feinstein (Democrat-Calif.) and Robert Bennett (Republican-Utah), and Rep. Jim Kolbe (Republican-Ariz.).

Romulo, who proceeded to Washington D.C. following the Interfaith Dialogue at the United Nations in New York City, also met with World Bank president Paul Wolfowitz.

Romulo described Cochran, Feinstein and Wolfowitz as "old friends of the Philippines."

While in Washington, Romulo received the commitment of the lawmakers to support efforts in the US Congress to provide budget support for the development of Mindanao in anticipation of the conclusion of the government's peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), for the benefits and entitlements to Filipino war veterans, and toward capacity-building in fighting terrorism.

"There is particular confidence in our search for peace in the southern Philippines and our efforts at building greater peace, understanding and tolerance through interfaith dialogue and better governance. The US Congress is willing to invest in the future of a peaceful and developed Mindanao," Romulo said.

PCIJ blog hacked

AN EGO trip or a warning?

The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) is puzzled over an unauthorized posting on its blog page, where its writers had for the past weeks been blogging discussions and analyses of the tape scandal that has been rocking Malacañang.

"We tend to think that this is not just a hacker's ego, given the timing. Since last week, we've been getting tips that they were getting somebody to hack our side," said Sheila Coronel, PCIJ executive director.

Coronel, however, could not say for sure who "they" were.

At 4:16 p.m. yesterday, the PCIJ blog (www.pcij.org/blog/) was penetrated by a hacker who managed to post a long letter titled "A Hacker's Journey." The PCIJ blog, hosted by a United States-based firm, had only been accessible to seven writers of the PCIJ.

Coronel said the hacker used WordPress, a blogging program that powers the PCIJ blog, and uploaded a letter dated January 2004. Apparently, the letter, where the hacker identified himself as "Rebz," was his signature.

Tarra V. Quismundo

Loren set on pursuing case, to plunk down P5M

By Cynthia D. Balana and Leila B. Salaverria

LOREN Legarda, who lost the vice presidential race in 2004, yesterday distanced herself from street protests demanding the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro, saying she would prove her charges of cheating against her political opponents.

Legarda, a former senator, said she would deposit an initial P5 million with the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET) on Thursday so it could start the recount of votes in provinces mentioned in her election protest against De Castro.

She needs to raise some P12 million to P14 million for her protest involving some 26,000 precincts, her lawyer Rufus Rodriguez told reporters on Friday. The money she has so far raised had come from supporters, she said.

De Castro won by over 800,000 votes, which Legarda had contested. The PET ruled that her protest was sufficient in form and substance.

Legarda also said she would ask the Supreme Court, which also sits as the PET, to speed up the hearing on the protest case to end the uncertainty over the results of the vice presidential race.

She cited new cases of massive fraud allegedly committed by De Castro, resulting in her defeat as the candidate of the opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

One proof of *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving), Legarda said, were the discrepancies in the figures reflected in the certificates of canvass and in the electoral returns (ER).

Six pilot provinces

In her protest before the PET, Legarda identified six pilot provinces where election returns would supposedly show that she had been massively cheated in the canvassing. These were Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Cebu, Pampanga and Maguindanao.

Another example of obvious electoral fraud, Legarda said, was the statement of votes (SOV) from 21 precincts in Cebu City, which credited De Castro with a total of 1,353 votes, while the total number of votes for Loren was blocked out by red ink although the returns from individual precincts showed she had received a substantial number of votes in those precincts.

Legarda likewise presented a summary of "discrepancies" noted on the COC compared with the statement of votes (SOV) by precincts and election returns (ER). The COCs are the documents that are canvassed by Congress.

Hello Garci tapes

"I am revealing these new cases of fraud on the vice presidential election in view of these critical times brought about by the disclosure of the 'Hello Garci' audio tapes," Legarda said.

The audio tapes refer to the purported wiretapped conversations in which Ms Arroyo allegedly directs Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to rig the presidential election in her favor.

FOR SMOOTHER TAKEOFFS AND LANDINGS
Ninoy Aquino International Airport General Manager Alfonso Cusi (right) and Naia assistant general manager Elpidio Mendoza inspect the rehabilitation work on taxiway Charlie, work which forced big international aircraft taking off to make a detour that resulted in several miscalculations by pilots and flight delays. The repair work costing P20 million will be finished by Aug. 10. ROGER MARGALLO

What 'solved' means to PNP

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE CHIEF of the Philippine National Police disagrees with an assessment of an international delegation that no progress has been made in the investigation of murdered Filipino journalists.

"Unfortunately, they are not setting the parameters or definition of terms," Director General Arturo Lomibao told reporters yesterday. "We in the Philippines are setting the parameters."

On Sunday, officers of the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and the Southeast Asian Press Alliance said the murders of Filipino journalists were far from solved.

They said following a week-long fact-finding mission in the country that the Philippine government's definition of solved cases was misleading. They said Philippine authorities considered a crime solved when a suspect had been identified and charged in court even though no arrest had been made.

CPJ has said the Philippines is the "most murderous" country for journalists. An INQUIRER tally put at 93 the number of journalists slain since 1986 after the dictator Ferdinand Marcos was ousted.

"We have the Philippine criminal justice system, and so our definition is that once we identified the suspects and we have filed the case, then we are considering it solved for the purposes of our criminal justice system," Lomibao said.

Lomibao, however, agreed that justice is only served when a suspect is convicted and jailed. "That is the ideal delivery of justice," he said.

Lomibao said he thought he had been successful "to a certain degree" in his investigations into the killings of several journalists since he took office in March.

He cited several cases where suspects had been arrested, including the alleged killers of Marlene Esperat of Sultan Kudarat.

Lomibao said he had been quick to descend on crime scenes and personally supervise the progress of the investigations. He had also assured family members of the slain journalists that the police would vigorously pursue their cases and that there would be no "sacred cows."

"My thinking is that once a journalist or media personality is killed, it chips away at our freedom of expression," he said, adding that as a result, he was giving these cases a "very, very special concern." *With Nikko Dizon*

Illegal drugs trade worth ₱300B–PDEA

By Leila B. Salaverria

TRAFFICKING in illegal drugs has grown alarmingly in the Philippines, where it is now a hundred-billion-peso industry serving the rest of Southeast Asia.

Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency Director General Anselmo Avenido told reporters yesterday that about 3.4 million Filipinos were "more or less hooked to drugs." At the same time, Avenido said five transnational crime groups were using the country as a transshipment point for drugs, mostly coming from China and destined for points across Southeast Asia.

Several government agencies, including the police and the National Bureau of Investigation, were tracking the drug syndicates.

"We assigned specific teams to go after them," he said during a forum to mark the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking.

At the same forum, Rep. Roque Ablan pushed for tougher laws. Ablan, who heads the House committee on dangerous drugs, said the proposed bill seeking to allow policemen to wiretap phone conversations of drug pushers would help solve the illegal drugs problem.

"We listen to the simulated conversation between the President and a government official but we don't want to listen to the conversation between drug pushers?" he said.

Local contacts

Foreigners from China, Hong Kong, Macau and Malaysia are suspected of running the syndicates with local contacts, Avenido said.

"In almost all the shabu laboratories, we see the participation of foreigners," he said, noting their work as chemists and cooks.

"Some groups headed by Chinese have Taiwanese followers while some groups headed by Taiwanese have Chinese followers. They don't observe the diplomatic system," he noted.

Ablan said foreign syndicates were attracted to the country because it is cheaper to manufacture drugs here. Also, several suspects have been able to escape, and no convicted drug trafficker has been executed despite the death penalty, the congressman said.

Most of the drug-making equipment authorities found in shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) laboratories were imported and were likely smuggled in, Avenido said. The chemicals were imported as well, usually from China and India.

High estimate

The PDEA chief said the "high estimate" of the size of the illegal drugs industry was P300 billion; P150 billion was the low estimate.

Of the country's 3.4 million drug users, he said, 1.8 million were regular users while 1.6 million were occasional users.

He also estimated that a drug user would spend between P2,000 to P5,000 a month on approximately five grams of shabu.

Avenido pointed to recent successes in the antidrugs campaign.

Official records showed nearly 92,000 drug violators—including 174 foreigners—had been arrested from 2002 to May this year, and 61,617 drug cases had been filed in court. The problem is so pervasive that 70 percent of all detainees and prisoners are in jail for drug-related cases, Avenido said.

Since 2002, he said, law enforcement officials had seized P40 billion worth of illegal drugs and dismantled 32 shabu laboratories.

At the same time, illicit drugs worth an estimated P260 billion remained unaccounted for and may have already been shipped abroad, said Interior Undersecretary Wencelito Andanar.

But Avenido said the public must cooperate more to rid the country of the menace.

"We should, all of us, participate in the antidrug campaign, because if we just leave this campaign to the government, then there is just very little we can do," he said. "We are still very far from our common vision of a drug-free Philippines." *With reports from AP, AFP*

More abusers turning to pot

By Leila B. Salaverria

TAKE away shabu, there's still "mary jane" or "pot."

Drug users who are having a hard time getting shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) have been turning to marijuana, according to Anselmo Avenido, director general of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency.

Speaking at the forum of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking yesterday, Avenido said the thing with marijuana was it is easy to grow. He said there had been instances when authorities burned marijuana plants without realizing the seeds had dropped to the ground. After a few weeks, the seeds would sprout into new marijuana plants.

But Avenido denied reports the Philippines had been exporting marijuana and hashish, saying the marijuana available in the country was of the "lower kind." He said most countries preferred the marijuana from Mexico and Canada.

"*Ang marijuana natin walang asim kung suka ito* (If our marijuana were vinegar, it has no bite)," he said.

The fight against illegal drugs received a boost last week after the Dangerous Drugs Board classified ketamine as a dangerous drug. The certification will be effective before the end of July.

Avenido said ketamine was commonly used as an anesthetic for people and animals. Some people, however, have taken to using it as a mind-altering substance.

He said users sometimes boiled the liquid ketamine to crystallize it. They then snort the crystals, which directly affect the brain.

He said ketamine was slightly more expensive than shabu and was used as a substitute for Ecstacy, another expensive mood-altering drug.

United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, meanwhile, called on people to avoid drugs by valuing themselves and making healthy choices.

"Making healthy choices also means choosing a lifestyle that has a positive effect on the body and mind, including, for example, participation in sports to improve health and well-being," he said in a statement.

13 Pinoys nabbed in US for selling fake papers

THIRTEEN Filipino nationals were arrested last week while six others were being hunted by the Office of the New Jersey Attorney General in the United States, after they were charged with trafficking in and using fraudulent immigration and identification documents for illegal immigrants from the Philippines.

According to the US-based newspaper, Filipino Reporter (www.filipinoreporter.com), the 13 defendants were arrested on June 22 and appeared in superior courts in four different counties the following day.

The article said that among those indicted was the alleged broker of the fake documents who had arranged for Filipinos to obtain the papers needed to remain in the US.

According to the report, the indictments were the result of a 20-month investigation by the NJ Attorney General's office.

The defendants reportedly sold Philippine passports with counterfeit immigration stamps, green cards and stamps affixed to foreign passports that allowed employment until a green card was issued.

The article also said the NJ Office of Counter-Terrorism initiated the investigation as fake documents could lead to terrorism.

It quoted an official as taking note of the reported presence of terrorist groups, some believed to be connected to al-Qaida, in the Philippines.

According to the NJ Attorney General's office, the charges filed against the Filipinos have penalties of up to five years in state prison and fines up to $15,000 upon conviction. *Nikko Dizon*

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Stop delaying trial, Erap lawyers asked

By Nelson F. Flores

SPECIAL Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to caution the lawyers of former President Joseph Estrada against continually delaying the plunder trial of their client by presenting irrelevant witnesses.

Villa-Ignacio said in the past three months Estrada's lawyers presented as witnesses a notary public, a book author and a journalist even if their testimonies were insignificant. He said what they testified to had no bearing on the criminal charges faced by Estrada.

"We do not know how long this would continue. The defense is just killing time," Villa-Ignacio said.

Defense lawyer Jose Flaminiano, for his part, warned Villa-Ignacio against making statements that clearly showed the prosecution's "hostility and extreme bias" against Estrada.

He said that unlike the prosecution, which has the resources of the state at its disposal, the defense panel was finding it difficult to locate its witnesses.

"The duty of the prosecution is not to convict but to see that justice is done," Flaminiano said.

He said the defense panel could "present any witness" it deemed important to Estrada's defense.

He said the continuing failure of the prosecution to file charges against the numerous "John and Jane Does" implicated with Estrada, despite their having been named in court by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, showed that Estrada was a victim of "selective prosecution."

He also said the defense never ran out of witnesses contrary to Villa-Ignacio's claim.

To prove his point, Flaminiano called on this writer and fellow INQUIRER reporter Armand Nocum and the Philippine Star's Delon Porcalla to testify tomorrow on stories they had written in connection with Estrada's plunder case.

He also promised to present Estrada soon on the witness stand.

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Inquirer issue in time capsule to be buried with Sin today

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE NEWSPAPER that religiously chronicled the life of Jaime Cardinal Sin will follow him to the grave. Literally.

The June 22 issue of the INQUIRER, whose entire front page was devoted to stories about the prelate and his death, will be among several symbolic items that would be placed in his coffin during his burial at the Manila Cathedral this morning.

The issue, which carried the banner story "Liberator of Filipinos" and a huge photo of an aging but radiantly triumphant Sin, would be rolled up and tucked into a time capsule, said Fr. Rufino Sescon, a member of the committee organizing the funeral.

The capsule would also contain the master plan of the Cardinal Sin Village, the community the late prelate had built for the poorest of the poor in Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila, as well as copies of other newspapers with accounts of Sin's death on June 21, the priest said. The committee had yet to complete the list as of yesterday.

The time capsule and its contents are meant to keep Sin's memory alive for future generations, he said.

"If something happens to the cathedral, at least people will be able to retrieve this time capsule and they'll be able to determine that the remains are those of His Eminence," he told reporters during a media tour of the burial site yesterday morning.

The INQUIRER had served as a colorful repository of Sin's struggles and advocacies since it was born in 1985, during the waning months of the Marcos dictatorship. He was a fixture on its pages, especially when Sin led the second of two Edsa revolutions that ousted President Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Ardent coverage

The INQUIRER's coverage remained ardent even when the cardinal didn't seem "newsworthy" and other newspapers didn't seem to take notice of him.

In April 2001, the INQUIRER ran a story on a "hale and hearty" Sin at 72. The article revisited a cardinal saddled lately with diabetes, who, nevertheless, maintained his legendary appetite.

Two years later, on the occasion of his 74th birthday, there was another story on Sin planning to spend his retirement in his family's ancestral home in New Washington, Aklan.

Save for regular updates on Sin's deteriorating health, the last Holy Week was the last time the INQUIRER did a story on Sin before he died. It was a feature on his Sta. Ana village. Visiting the place had become his passion since he retired as archbishop of Manila in 2004.

FR. RUFINO Sescon, secretary of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, inspects the crypt beneath the Manila Cathedral where the Church leader will be entombed. REM ZAMORA

Besides the time capsule containing the INQUIRER issue, Sin's dark mahogany coffin will hold some of the symbols of his bishopric and cardinalate—his red cassock, skullcap and mitre, sash, alb, pectoral cross, gold chausible and the very first staff he received when he was ordained a bishop.

Sin's final resting place will be the crypt located beneath the altar of the Manila Cathedral. Sescon said the structure was patterned after St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

The marble tomb, seven-feet deep and 220 cm long, stands beside that of former Manila Archbishop Gabriel Reyes. Directly across are the tombs of Rufino Cardinal Santos and American Michael O'Doherty.

People still seek out Sin for hope…

From page A1

From his pulpit came the divorce between the Church and the Marcos dictatorship.

Sin went on to lead the first Edsa Revolution that toppled Marcos and restored democracy in 1986. He helped repeat history 15 years later, this time against President Joseph Estrada.

Too political, too outspoken

Through all his struggles with the high and the mighty, the cardinal similarly had to parry attacks, some of which came from fellow members of the clergy. They saw him as too political and too outspoken.

One mourner at the cathedral didn't think so and wrote on the board:. "You have been an inspiration. While most of us sometimes don't understand—everything you did was always for the good of many."

In his final days, Sin was a quiet observer of Philippine affairs, often seen contemplating while receiving updates from television and newspaper reports, according to his younger brother, Dr. Ramon Sin.

He was particularly concerned about the tape scandal hounding President Macapagal-Arroyo whom he had helped assume office as a consequence of the 2001 Edsa Revolution.

Sin died without saying a word on the country's current political turmoil.

One well-wisher at the Manila Cathedral didn't seem to mind this uncharacteristic silence and wrote: "I have always admired your guts and your courage to speak the truth."

20,000 mourners

Sin's funeral today is expected to become the biggest and most solemn in Philippine history. The chief of the Metro Manila police yesterday said at least 20,000 people were expected to attend.

Director Vidal Querol said some 800 policemen, including about 130 men from Manila's Traffic Management Group, would be fielded in and near the cathedral.

A funeral march is set at 9 a.m. around Plaza Roma in front of the church. Sin will be accorded full state honors before his burial in a crypt underneath the church.

Besides members of the diplomatic community, at least four foreign cardinals from Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and the United States are expected to pay their last respects to Sin, according to Querol.

Expect heavy traffic

Several streets around the cathedral would be closed to traffic, and motorists were advised to avoid the area.

Western Police District director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong said there would be heavy traffic on P. Burgos Street, Taft Avenue and Roxas Boulevard because of the funeral procession in the Intramuros area.

"We have been anticipating this scenario so there has been an assurance from the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) and the Traffic Enforcement Group (TEG) to provide additional traffic policemen and aides," Bulaong said in a phone interview.

Heavy traffic was also expected on Bonifacio Drive, Soriano Street, Adwana Street, General Luna Street, Magallanes Drive and P. Burgos Street, he said.

Buses and vehicles of priests, bishops and dignitaries were expected to arrive at these areas very early today.

"As early as 7 a.m., students will be marching to the Manila Cathedral from their drop-off point at the Luneta Park," the WPD chief added.

Iloilo says goodbye

He stressed that Anda Circle and Magallanes Drive would be the drop-off point for all mourners to avoid congestion in the Intramuros area.

Yesterday, some 1,000 Ilonggos bade goodbye to Sin in a concelebrated Mass for his eternal repose at the Jaro Cathedral in Iloilo City.

"A priest and prophet of our time," was how Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo called the late cardinal in his homily before a crowd of priests, nuns, seminarians and students of Church-run schools.

"He was simply unique. But his life, his humor, his contagious laughter and his stories will become a legend to inspire generations of Filipinos," he said.

Lagdameo was joined by about 30 other priests during the Mass.

A native of New Washington, Aklan, Sin was a product of the St. Vincent Ferrer Seminary in Jaro, and went on to serve as auxiliary bishop and archbishop of Jaro in 1974 before being named archbishop of Manila—a post he held until 2004.

NDF condoles

In Lucena City, the communist-led National Democratic Front shared the grief of the Filipino people in the passing of Sin.

In a belated statement, Luis Jalandoni, chair of the NDF negotiating panel, recalled the courageous role the late cardinal played in toppling the Marcos dictatorship.

"His firm stand against the human rights violations of the Marcos dictatorship expressed the people's just aspirations. Such a stand for the people had tremendous impact due to his great prestige and influence as a Church leader," said Jalandoni, himself a Catholic priest before he embraced the revolutionary cause. *With reports from and Raj Padilla, PDI Visayas Bureau; Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; and Luige A. del Puerto and Margaux C. Ortiz in Manila*

Correction

IN THE JUNE 21 issue, the caption of a photograph in Maurice Arcache's column, "Without Batting an Eyelash," on Page C3 of the Lifestyle section misstated the name of the Air France-KLM marketing manager in the Philippines. The airline's local marketing manager, who is on the left of the Sorial couple in the photo, is Bingo Braganza—not Bonanza.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses: glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent, pending the appointment of a new readers' advocate, to Isagani Yambot, publisher, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address: iyambot@inquirer.com.ph.

Right move…

From page A1

"Apologizing is not enough," said defeated presidential candidate Bro. Eddie Villanueva, head of Bangon Pilipinas. "She should return the mandate given to her by the people. I'm in favor of special elections that should be held untainted. If she wants to be a statesman, she should resign and lead the holding of a special election."

Speaker Jose de Venecia, in a statement sent from Kiev, Ukraine, where he was on a visit, said Ms Arroyo "has regained the moral high ground by ending her period of isolation … It is our hope that our officials and our people will now move forward to attend to the many problems still confronting the nation."

Rep. Gilbert Remulla, chair of a joint House panel investigating the wiretap, said, "Now that there is an admission by the highest official of the land, all the more that the investigation should continue … The implications are bigger and wider. It just opens up a lot more questions."

Remulla said the controversial audio should now be played.

Opposition Sen. Jinggoy Estrada said, "I am saddened. She deceived the public. She doesn't deserve to stay a minute longer in Malacañang. Asking for forgiveness is OK, but there should be justice first before forgiveness is given."

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said the opposition would now study its next moves. "She will have to face the legal consequences of talking to an election official during the election. Whatever action we take will be in accordance with the Constitution."

"We are ready to give the President a chance," said Donald Dee, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "I believe our countrymen want peace so we can attend to our economic problems. That is the most important agenda before us."

Guillermo Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club, took a wait-and-see attitude, much as stock market investors have done. "I think now we have to see what the legal experts say what next steps should take place.

"It's a political blunder. It's not only morally wrong, but it also has serious legal implications," said Earl Parreno, analyst at the Institute of Political and Electoral Reforms.

Parreno said the President's statement would give her political opponents more ammunition to hit her in the court of public opinion and in the legal arena as well.

"I don't agree that this will be a closed chapter," said Jose Vistan, an analyst at AB Capital Securities. "The political tension will remain. I think the opposition will use her admission to further their goals … This will not be good for the financial markets."

Rep. Crispin Beltran described Ms Arroyo as a "drowning leader."

"She sounded desperate as she made her plea for unity and her apology was not enough. No amount of apologies will help her win back the Filipino people's trust," said Beltran.

"The US Embassy does not have anything to do with this for us to comment … But I can tell you we continuously support the Philippine government and its head, President Arroyo," said Ronald Post, US Embassy public affairs counselor.

"I am deeply saddened," said Rep. Roilo Golez. "I feel that she committed a very serious offense … I am now joining calls for her to resign."

Sen. Miriam Santiago said Ms Arroyo committed no crime. "There is no basis for her to resign or be impeached. The torture of adverse publicity and speculation in the past weeks should be sufficient punishment, if she has committed any moral lapse." *Reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Christine O. Avendaño, Philip Tubeza, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Michael Ubac, Nikko Dizon, Jerome Aning and Reuters*

Experts say impeachment move a long shot

From page A1

tive panel looking into the "Gloriagate" tape, said the President's statement would certainly have political and legal ramifications.

Bernas said that if Ms Arroyo called then Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to ask about her votes, "that's a lapse in judgment."

"If she called Garcillano to tell him, 'Fix my votes,' that's a severe lapse in judgment," he told the INQUIRER.

Bernas, who said he deliberately inhibited himself from listening to any of the recorded conversations, said there was impropriety in talking with a Commission on Elections official during the canvassing of votes.

"At the very least, it's improper. Whether it's impeachable or not, that's debatable," he said.

Legal issues

Lawyer Christian Monsod, former Comelec chair and delegate to the 1986 Constitutional Commission, said that even with the President's admission, there were still legal issues to resolve before proceeding with impeachment.

"You have the legal problems with respect to the tape," Monsod told the INQUIRER, referring to the "wiretapped" nature of the voice records.

Philippine Constitution Association expert Antonio Betito said the President must have already been briefed by her lawyers that even with her admission, the tapes could still not be used as evidence in any tribunal.

Legal advice

"She has certainly been advised by her lawyers. Even if she admitted talking to a commissioner, the tape could still not be used as evidence," Betito told the INQUIRER.

"The President admitted being the one on the tape. So what? What can we do?" he added.

Monsod said it seemed the administration was confident it had the necessary votes in Congress to nip an impeachment complaint in the bud. There are only 15 minority congressmen in the 230-member House of Representatives.

He proposed instead the formation of an independent commission created by an act of Congress and approved by the President to look into the alleged electoral fraud and the controversial taped conversations between Ms Arroyo and Garcillano.

Independent probe

"The next logical step is … Congress enacts a law creating an independent commission and signed by the President just like the Davide Commission," Monsod said, referring to the body created to look into the spate of coups during the Aquino administration.

Monsod said that such a body would have powers to subpoena and even protect witnesses unlike a fact-finding initiative by civil society. He said that even a probe team created by the President would not have the same authority as one created by law.

"If there's a conspiracy to cheat, it follows that many people are involved [but] it is unlikely that anybody will come out for fear of retribution. There's always the question of immunity," Monsod said.

"You need people to speak up," he added.

Monsod said that such a commission won't suffer the credibility issues that a body created by the President might have. More importantly, he added that the independent commission might come up with the evidence that may constitute stronger evidence to impeach the President.

Comelec reputation

He also expressed concern that Ms Arroyo's statement did not touch on the need to repair the damaged reputation of the Commission on Elections. He said that an independent commission could do just that.

Monsod said a credible Comelec is basic in a democracy. "In fact, it is a cornerstone," he said.

The INQUIRER asked Monsod if he expected Ms Arroyo to form an independent and powerful commission to investigate the alleged electoral fraud and the tapes, the constitutional expert and election law expert said: "There's a statesman in every politician."

"It's up to us to bring it out."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, June 28, 2005
13th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	**Gen 19:15-29**
Gospel:	**Matthew 8:23-27**

Jesus got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Without warning a fierce storm hit the lake, with waves sweeping the boat. But Jesus was asleep.

They woke him and cried, "Lord save us! We are lost!" But Jesus answered, "Why are you so afraid, you of little faith?" Then he stood up and ordered the wind and sea; and it became completely calm.

The people were astonished. They said, "What kind of man is he? Even the winds and the sea obey him."

Commentary

Jesus gets into a boat with his disciples and exhausted falls asleep. But a storm arises and the disciples are terrified. And Jesus just sleeps. They have not learned to be in his presence, secure and safe no matter what happens. So they wake him. Jesus chides them (and us) "Why are you so afraid, you of little faith?" Even with him they don't know him or his power. He stops the storm, orders the wind and sea to obey him. Jesus is the Lord of creation, the Lord of Life, the Lord of all history and people. Our God is always mightier and stronger than anything in our small lives. We must remember to relate to Jesus as God, not just personally as if we were the only people in the world. Who is this man? Always more than anything we could perceive, know and understand. We must grow into an awareness of the awesomeness of our Lord.

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People power – boon or bane for RP democracy

'Filipinos are too willing to resort to extra-legal means in all aspects of political-economic life'

THOUSANDS of demonstrators urge President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down in Friday's rally in Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

TOM TALLEDO has seen it all before.

He hit Metro Manila's streets to join the million-strong "people power" protests that toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and was also there 15 years later when Joseph Estrada was forced out of the presidency.

The 40-year-old teacher was dreaming of making history again on Friday as he stood in the sweltering heat with several thousand other protesters calling for President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down over allegations of election fraud.

"It will be good for the Filipinos, but not for the corrupt ones," Talledo said when asked what another uprising would achieve.

"People power means power to the people, so how can it be bad for the people?"

Nearly 20 years after Marcos fell, though, talk of people power often elicits pride and despair in equal measure.

Economic stagnation, entrenched poverty and regular political crises have given Asia's more authoritarian states plenty of ammunition to defend the view that too much democracy is a dangerous thing.

But the problem may be that the Philippines—for all its street protests, colorful elections and raucous debate—still does not have enough real democracy, analysts say.

The students and nuns who stopped Marcos' tanks with flowers helped inspire people power uprisings around the world but left a culture of extra-constitutional change at home whose effects are still being felt.

For some Filipinos, however, the People Power II in 2001 was an illegal snatching of the presidency from former movie star Estrada, who is still on trial for corruption.

Four years on, Ms Arroyo is under siege from a bitter opposition that sees her as an impostor.

"I am not sure that the Philippines gives democracy a bad name but it indicates the importance of strong political institutions to the success of a democracy," said Zachary Abuza, director of East Asian studies at Boston's Simmons College.

"In the Philippines, people are too willing to resort to extra-legal means at all levels of political-economic life, and that weakens democracy."

Weak system

Abuza said weak political parties, a civil service undermined by a lack of funds and corruption, and frequent killings of journalists meant the Philippines was missing some essential pillars of a stable democracy.

Despite being hailed as a triumph over dictatorship, the 1986 uprising was notable for continuity as much as change.

Initial hopes for radical reform were dashed as President Corazon Aquino did little to narrow the huge gap between rich and poor or stamp out rampant corruption.

Most importantly, analysts say, Aquino failed to solve the problem of land reform, leaving vast tracts of land under the ownership of elite descendants of Spanish colonizers, which included her own family.

"I don't think too much democracy is the problem, but an elite that has divided the material and political spoils for much too long, challenged only at times by populists ... or various movie stars," said Ian Buruma, professor of human rights and journalism at New York's Bard College.

To end the cycle of populism and instability, the Philippines has long debated the idea of shifting to a parliamentary democracy from the US-style presidential model.

Ms Arroyo herself has pledged to make Charter change—known locally as "Cha-cha"—a reality next year.

Proponents say a parliamentary system would end gridlock between the executive and legislature that dogs Philippine politics.

It should foster stronger parties and reduce strife because the government and legislature depend on each other for survival, they say.

The scandals threatening Ms Arroyo have illustrated the shortcomings of the current system.

Separate inquiries in the two houses of Congress have often degenerated into political point-scoring, with the opposition quick to back street protests to raise pressure on Ms Arroyo.

Parliamentary setup

"If there had been a parliamentary system, these pressures would have been channeled into the parliamentary arena, where a vote of no-confidence could bring down a government," Amando Doronila wrote in his column in the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

But constitutional change is no panacea.

Until strong party loyalties develop, a parliamentary system can result in frequent changes of governments and snap elections, adding to political instability.

And many are skeptical that lawmakers who often profit handsomely from the current system will ever agree on reform.

"It is unlikely that the current Congress will ever amend the Constitution," Abuza said. "Simply, there are too many vested interests with the existing system." *Reuters*

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GMA: Hello… it's me

From page A1

Curiously, throughout her statement, Ms Arroyo made not a single direct reference to former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, the man she was supposedly talking to on the phone.

Garcillano has denied being the male voice on the tape. His whereabouts have remained a mystery.

Ms Arroyo spoke from her study at Malacañang, avoiding a meeting with reporters, who had to content themselves with watching her on a video wall at the Palace. Malacañang officials said she spoke live.

"For the last several weeks, the issue of the tape recordings has spun out of control. Tonight, I want to set the record straight. You deserve an explanation from me, because you are the people I was elected to serve," the President said.

She said she made the call "after the election results were already in and the votes had been counted," but the canvassing process had been slow.

"I was anxious to protect my votes and during that time had conversations with many people, including a Comelec official. My intent was not to influence the outcome of the election, and it did not," she said.

She added: "The election had already been decided and the votes counted. And as you remember, the outcome had been predicted by every major public opinion poll and adjudged free, fair and decisive by international election observers, and our own Namfrel (National Citizens Movement for Free Elections)."

Appeal to the nation

She closed her statement with an appeal: "I ask each and every one of you to join hands with me in a show of unity, to help forge one Philippines.

"Our nation is strong and getting stronger. The progress is steady and I ask you to walk with me on this journey to rebuild our great nation. I remain your humble servant and promise you that I will fulfill my constitutional oath of office to serve the people to the best of my ability."

Bunye earlier said the recordings had been altered, adding that they may have been part of an opposition-backed plot to oust her. Congress began investigating the issue last week.

The allegations about her alleged role in rigging the presidential vote had set off widespread calls, including among top businessmen and politicians allied with the President, for her to directly address the accusations.

Opposition and left-wing groups have demanded her resignation.

The scandal erupted early this month as Ms Arroyo was grappling with daunting problems, including rising oil prices, a huge budget deficit, and security issues that forced her to take unpopular steps, such as new taxes.

Her popularity rating has plunged to minus-33 percent, the lowest for a Philippine leader since 1986.

Ms Arroyo also has been buffeted by accusations that her son, Mikey, and brother-in-law, Iggy, both members of the House of Representatives, pocketed huge payoffs from "jueteng," an illegal numbers game. The two have strongly denied the allegations, which prompted Mikey to take a leave of absence from the House.

Opposition groups have staged almost daily demonstrations but they haven't matched the huge "people power" protests that led to the downfall of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Ms Arroyo's predecessor, Joseph Estrada, in 2001.

The political controversy coincided with public concern over the rising cost of living, an expanded value-added tax (VAT) due to take effect on July 1, and a jump in the cost of imported crude after oil price soared above $60 a barrel.

The peso, which hit a 5-month low of 55.94 to the dollar last week on perceptions of rising political risk, hovered around 55.55 on Monday, stronger than its close at 55.65 on Friday.

Mike Moran, regional economist at Standard Chartered Bank in Hong Kong, said Ms Arroyo must offer clarity to investors concerned about the economic impact of the recent political volatility.

Moran described the political controversy hounding Ms Arroyo as "a real shame given some genuinely positive developments."

The main stock index ended 0.84 percent higher on Monday.

Officials said Ms Arroyo had turned to a small group of advisers, led by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, to extricate herself from the most serious political crisis to confront her presidency.

Crisis advisers

"The President is getting suggestions from a lot of sectors but she gets her advice primarily from Secretary Ermita," said Environment Secretary Michael Defensor, who is also part of the newly formed crisis group.

Defensor said Ms Arroyo had moved to consolidate her core crisis group in order to make a more intelligent and coordinated response to what he described as a calculated attack on the honor of the President.

"I think we needed to get our act together because this crisis is serious. We can't do this piecemeal," he said.

He conceded that the Palace might have mishandled the wiretapping scandal, particularly in the first few days after Bunye broke the news that the opposition would come out with a tape on Ms Arroyo.

Although he would not say that Bunye made a mistake in initially confirming it was Ms Arroyo on the tape and playing a CD copy of it to media, Defensor said that the government erred when it tightened up on the release of the CD copies and the publication of their transcripts in print media and the Internet.

The Queen's men

"It only made more people curious about the CD," said Defensor, citing Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's initial order to arrest anyone distributing copies of the tape.

"It would have been better if we just let it be so as not to give the tape more notoriety it does not deserve," he said.

Defensor said Ermita had "the President's ear on the issue."

He said the other key members of Ermita's crisis team were Bunye, group head for mass media Cerge Remonde and political adviser Gabriel Claudio. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., AP, Reuters*

IN THE KNOW

Lapse in judgment—shades of Clinton

"LAPSE in judgment" was the phrase President Macapagal-Arroyo used yesterday to describe her impropriety in talking with an election official. Coincidentally, it was the same phrase that then US President Bill Clinton used seven years ago when he admitted to the American public his inappropriate relationship with White House intern Monika Lewinsky.

"It constituted a critical lapse of judgment and a personal failure on my part for which I am solely and completely responsible," Clinton, whose friendship with Ms Arroyo dates back to their student days in Georgetown University, said on Aug. 17, 1998.

Earlier that day, Clinton testified before a grand jury about his affair with Lewinsky. Four months later, Clinton was impeached by the House of Representative on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice.

The impeachment trial lasted from Jan. 7 until Feb. 12, 1999. The Senate subsequently acquitted Clinton.

Whether Ms Arroyo will share the same fate as her friend, Bill Clinton, is still not clear.

Full text of GMA message

Mga minamahal kong kababayan.

For the last several weeks, the issue of the tape recordings has spun out of control. Tonight, I want to set the record straight. You deserve an explanation from me, because you are the people I was elected to serve.

As you recall, the election canvassing process was unnecessarily slow even after the election results were already in and the votes had been counted.

I was anxious to protect my votes and during that time had conversations with many people, including a Comelec official. My intent was not to influence the outcome of the election, and it did not. As I mentioned, the election had already been decided and the votes counted. And as you remember, the outcome had been predicted by every major public opinion poll and adjudged free, fair and decisive by international election observers, and our own Namfrel.

That said, let me tell you how I personally feel. I recognize that making any such call was a lapse in judgment. I'm sorry. I also regret taking so long to speak before you on this matter. I take full responsibility for my actions and to you and to all those good citizens who may have had their faith shaken by these events. I want to assure you that I have redoubled my efforts to serve the nation and earn your trust.

Nagagambala ako. Maliwanag na may kakulangan sa wastong pagpapasya ang nangyaring pagtawag sa telepono. Pinagsisisihan ko ito nang lubos. Pinananagutan ko nang lubusan ang aking mga ginawa, at humihingi ako ng tawad sa inyo, sa lahat ng mga butihing mamamayan na nabawasan ng tiwala dahil sa mga pangyayaring ito. Ibig kong tiyakin sa inyo na lalo pa akong magsisikap upang maglingkod sa bayan at matamo ang inyong tiwala.

I took office with a mandate to carry out a plan for the nation. Since that time, I have focused on making the tough but necessary decisions to make up for years of economic neglect. We passed a comprehensive, fiscally responsible national budget; raised new and necessary revenues to reinvest in the people; and implemented new anticorruption measures that have led to the highest collection of taxes in history.

Nothing should stand in the way of this work, or the next phase of my reform agenda, which includes new investments in education and social services with our new revenues; and an expansion of our successful anticorruption and lifestyle checks.

That is why I want to close this chapter and move on with the business of governing.

I ask each and every one of you to join hands with me in a show of unity, to help forge One Philippines, where everyone is equal under the law, and where everyone has the opportunity to use their God-given talents to make a better life.

Our nation is strong and getting stronger. The progress is steady and I ask you to walk with me on this journey to rebuild our great nation. I remain your humble servant and promise you that I will fulfill my constitutional oath of office to serve the people to the best of my ability.

God Bless the Philippines.

Controversial portions of GMA-Garci tape

From page A1

Female: *Oo, oo.*

Male: *Kaya kuwan, pero bakit naman nila pa*-file-*an yang mga* military, *nasa kanila lahat. Ayaw na ngang mag*-give way *sa aming mga tao.*

Female: *Oo, oo. A, meron, meron silang pinakita*. (Unintelligible phrase from Male)

Male: *Okay, ma'am, mas mataas po siya pero mag*-compensate *po sa Lanao 'yun*.

Female: So will I still lead by more than 1 M overall?

Male: *Mga* (unintelligible phrase) advantage, ma'am, *parang ganun din ang lalabas.*

Female: It will not be less than 1 M?

Male: *Pipilitin ho natin yan, pero* as of the other day, 982.

Female: *Kaya nga, e.*

Male: *Pero* if we can get more in Lanao …

Female: *Hindi pa ba tapos?*

Male: *Hindi pa ho, meron pang kuwan, darating* from seven municipalities.

Female: Ah, okay, *oo, oo.*

Male: *Sige po.*

Female: Okay.

***

Female: *Hindi kaya puwedeng ma*-delay *'yung ano, 'yung* senatorial canvassing until after the voting and the rolls tonight?

Male: And the rolls? *O, sige po.*

***

Female: 40 plus *daw ang talo ko doon sa kuwan, sa* Cotabato?

Male: Ma'am?

Female: More than 40?

Male: More or less, *pero hindi naman siguro sosobra ng 40*, ma'am. *Sa atin pa rin ang* original.

Female: *A, ganun?* So *mali 'yung* figures *ni* Teng?

Male: *A, siguro kasi si Teng, kinausap niya 'yung* staff ni Attorney Bidol.

Female: *Oo.*

Male: *Kami ni* Attorney Bidol, *nag-uusap po ngayon.*

Female: *Oo.*

Male: *Parang* (unintelligible), ma'am, in a little while.

Female: *Oo, oo.*

Male: *Para makaano ninyo.*

***

Female: *Meron tayong pekeng* (unintelligible) *PR para sa* Sulu?

Male: *Saan po*, ma'am? Ma'am?

Female: Sulu, Sulu?

Male : *Oo*, ma'am, *meron.*

Female: *Nagawa ko nang* (unintelligible), *hindi?*

Male : *Lahat po meron.*

Female: *Kumpleto?* Okay, okay.

Male : *Hindi ho namin.*

Female: Okay, okay, okay.

***

Female: *Sabi nung kabila, nagpaplano-plano sila* among themselves, *meron daw sila nung* affidavit from teachers and Board of Canvassers na they witnessed and were made to cheat.

Male: *Wala naman pong* (unintelligible word) *ho nila, kaya yung kuwan ho kanina, yung sinabi n'yo sa* Pangutaran, (unintelligible phrase). It's true *na 'yung nag*-appear *doon na* (unintelligible word) *si FPJ pero sa* canvassing *sa* (Carmen?) *ang* results *'yun din hong* original *ang nalagay* because of the words and figures were not changed.

Female: Mmm, mmm.

Male: *Kasi sila* (unintelligible word) *ba, hindi masyadong marunong pa diyan. Medyo sila ang umano nun. Nag*-explain *ho sa akin yung* election officer *ng kuwan, sa* Pangutaran *din.*

Female: Mmm, mmm.

Male: *Pero sa* canvass, *sinabi naman ng* provincial Board of Canvassers *ang ginawa ho, yun din hong* original *na* votes *na 'yun din ho ang nabilang kaya wala hong* … (Conversation cut.)

***

Female: Garci.

Male: Ma'am?

Female: *O ano, pinapapunta kayo ni* Abalos?

Male: *Oo. ma'am.*

Female: *Oo.*

Male: *Oo, kay* (unintelligible) *ako sa* Mindanao.

Female: *Oo, oo.*

Male: *Kuwan lang. Kaya ngayon kung ano man ang kuwan, mga problema tawagan na lang.*

Female: *May problema sa* (unintelligible) *kasi iba-iba raw ang pinroclaim ng* Comelec *doon.* (Unintelligible) *ang importante, hindi madamay 'yung sa taas.*

Male: *Hindi ho, ako may hawak nu'n.*

Female: *Kasi ang isyu doon* (unintelligible) *pero sabi* (unintelligible) *tatakbo na lang sa munisipyo.*

Male: *Doon na lang ho. Okay na, okay na 'yun. Ako may hawak nu'n.*

Female: *So hindi ano, hindi maaapektuhan yung sa taas, a.*

Male: *Hindi ho.*

Female: (unintelligible)

Male: *Ay hindi ho, nasa akin ho 'yan.*

Female: Okay.

***

Female: *Si ano, si* Biazon, *nagbabanta. Kung madadaya raw siya, papabuksan daw niya 'yung ano at saka Tawi-Tawi, e, baka raw ako ang matalo doon.*

Male: *Baka nga ho.*

***

Female : *Sa* Lanao del Sur, *saka sa* Basilan, *hindi raw nag-ma*-match *'yung* SOV *sa* COC.

Male: *Kuwan ho 'yan, ang sinasabi niyang wala na naman ho?*

Female: *Hindi nagma*-match.

Male: *Hindi nagma*-match. *May posibilidad na hindi magma*-match *kung hindi nila sinunod yung individual SOV ng mga munisipyo. Pero ewan ko lang ho kung sa atin pabor o hindi. Kasi dun naman sa* Basilan *saka* Lanao Sur, *itong ginawa nila na 'yung pagpataas sa inyo, hindi naman ho kuwan, maayos naman ang paggawa, e.*

Female: *So nagma*-match?

Male: *Oho. Sa* Basilan *ay, 'yun, e,* (unintelligible word) *naman ang* military *du'n, e, hindi masyadong marunong kasi sila gumawa, e. Katulad doon sa* Sulu (unintelligible phrase) *pero hindi naman ho, kinausap kanina 'yung* chairman *ng* board *sa* Sulu. *Ang akin pa, e, patataguin ko na muna 'yung* EO *ng* Pagundaran, *na para hindi siya maka-testigo.*

Female: *Oo.*

Male: *Na*-explain *na ho 'yung kuwan,* Camarines Norte. Tomorrow, we will present the official communication *doon ho sa* (unintelligible word). *Du'n sa sinasabing wala hong laman yung* ballot box.

Female: *Oo, oo.*

Male: *Na-receive ho nila lahat, e.*

Female: *Oo.*

Male: Okay. *Tumawag ho kayo kanina, ma'am?*

Female: Yeah, about that Lanao del Sur *at saka* Basilan.

Male: *Uh-uh. Iaaano ko. Nag* (unintelligible phrase) about this. *Iaano ko, huwag ho kayo masyadong mabahala.* Anyway, we will take care of the (unintelligible word). *Kakausapin ko na si* Attorney, *kuwan,* Attorney Makalintal.

Female: *Tapos nu'n, si ano, tapos nu'n si* (unintelligible word), *meron silang* teacher *nasa* Witness Protection Program *ng kabila.*

Male: *Sino ho?*

Female: *'Yung kabila. May* teacher *daw silang hawak.*

Male: *Wala naman ho. Wala naman* (unintelligible word) *sila kasi yung kuwan,* military, *hawak yan sa* Tawi Tawi. *Wala naman hong kuwan tayo du'n. Wala tayong ginawa du'n. Isa lang 'yan. Talo nga tayo du'n. Talo nga si* (unintelligible word) *doon, e.*

Female: *Oo, oo.*

Male: *Oho. Sige, aanuhin ko ho 'yan.*

Female: Okay, okay.

Male: *Sige po.*

Lawyer files impeachment rap, but no takers in House

From page A1

House of Representatives, but opposition lawmakers said it would only help keep her in office.

It was Lozano who filed an impeachment complaint against then Vice President Arroyo in November 2000, accusing her of betrayal of public trust and culpable violation of the Constitution for openly calling for the resignation of then President Joseph Estrada.

Lozano, a supporter of the late actor Fernando Poe Jr., is the lawyer of the Coalition for National Solidarity, which is headed by retired Gen. Fortunato Abat, who has called on Ms Arroyo to step down.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero downplayed the complaint filed by Lozano against the President, saying it contained "no concrete basis" to impeach Ms Arroyo.

He warned the majority against endorsing Lozano's complaint which would kick in the one-year ban against the filing of another impeachment complaint against the President.

Under the law, no other impeachment complaint can be filed against a sitting President for a year once a complaint had been endorsed.

The complaint needs the endorsement of at least one lawmaker before the House can act on it, but not even militant lawmakers wanted to sponsor Lozano's complaint.

"From the point of view of the law and of Congress, there is still no impeachment complaint since no one has endorsed it," Escudero said.

Betrayal of public trust

In a five-page complaint filed with the Office of the House Secretary General yesterday morning, Lozano said Ms Arroyo should be impeached for betrayal of the public trust.

He said Ms Arroyo's silence on the "Gloriagate" tapes was an admission of guilt that she did rig the presidential election last year. [The President admitted last night that she was the woman on the tape and apologized for calling an election official during the canvassing of votes last year.]

In the taped conversation with then Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, Ms Arroyo directed him to rig the 2004 presidential election to give her a lead of at least one million votes over her nearest rival, according to opposition politicians.

Since copies of the taped conversation became public early this month, Garcillano has not surfaced.

"Her silence is admission. Garci's (Garcillano's) flight is guilt. What is admitted does not need proof. The guilty flees even if no man pursueth. The righteous is as bold as a lion," Lozano said.

"Premises considered, we respectfully submit that the Gloria-Garci prohibited conversation, amounting to conspiracy to cheat in the election, is a glaring betrayal of the public trust which is an impeachable offense against the sovereign people and (a) repudiation of 'God's support for Gloria,'" Lozano said.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday said the government had nothing to do with Lozano's impeachment complaint.

Unfair

"Lozano has never been with the administration, so it's unfair for anybody to say that it's a (Malacañang) ploy. We do not need a Lozano to do it for us," Gonzalez said at a press briefing at the Department of Justice.

Besides, he said, if the Constitution is followed, then the President committed nothing impeachable, notwithstanding suspicions that it was her voice recorded as talking with Garcillano.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor welcomed the impeachment complaint.

"Any private citizen can file this (impeachment complaint) as long as it will be endorsed by a member of Congress," Defensor said at a press briefing.

He said it was better to have an impeachment trial because this would be governed by the rules of evidence and guidelines.

But Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. earlier said initiating impeachment proceedings against Ms Arroyo would be very difficult because proadministration legislators were the overwhelming majority in the House. The complaint needs the support of at least a third of House members so the Senate can initiate an impeachment trial.

More meat

Escudero said the opposition would still study Lozano's complaint and wait for more evidence since a preliminary reading of it showed that it contained only "presumptive evidential principles."

"For us, the impeachment complaint should contain more meat before we file it," Escudero said.

"Our country had gone through a painful impeachment process [against a President] before and so, before we file a complaint, we will make sure that it is legal and contains the truth," he said.

While saying that they supported the complaint of Lozano "in spirit and in essence," Anakpawis party-list Representatives Crispin Beltran and Rafael Mariano also did not endorse his call to impeach the President.

They said militant groups were planning to file their own impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño warned against the filing of an impeachment complaint against the President "with the view of merely filing it and only for it to be dismissed and thus exempt the embattled Chief Executive from such proceedings for a year."

Escudero warned the majority that it would be "comical" if they endorsed Lozano's complaint.

"I hope the majority will not preempt the minority and endorse this complaint. It would be comical if the President's own party-mates endorse the complaint and then quash it later," he said. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Armand N. Nocum*

Oil prices worry GMA, TUCP

A NEW round of fuel price increases over the weekend has worried the Arroyo administration and the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines over its adverse impact on productivity and incomes of workers.

Petron Corp. and Flying V yesterday joined Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Caltex Philippines Inc., Total (Philippines) Petroleum Corp. and Eastern Petroleum Corp. in raising prices of gasoline and diesel by 50 centavos per liter.

"We are very much concerned about the streak of price increases of oil," Energy Secretary Raphael Perpetuo Lotilla said in a statement.

"For small economies like the Philippines, we need to focus on energy demand-restraint policies, without sacrificing overall productivity," Lotilla said.

He said the price of Dubai crude, used by local refiners, rose $1.05 per barrel to $53.23 on Friday as a result of "robust energy demand in large economies, particularly in the United States for summer requirements and China for heightened economic activities."

At the New York Mercantile Exchange, the front-month August contract crude smashed through the psychologically important $60 barrier in heavy Asian and European trading on Monday. By midday in Europe, it was fetching $60.45, up 61 cents.

Increases in pump prices—at a time when Ms Arroyo's popularity is at an all-time low—has also stoked fears of massive layoffs in the labor front.

"We anticipate employers to cut down or at least slow down their operations which may eventually result to massive layoffs," TUCP spokesperson Alex Aguilar said.

Lotilla said analysts expected further oil price increases despite pledges by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to pump more crude. *Reports by Ronnel Domingo, Jerome Aning and AFP*

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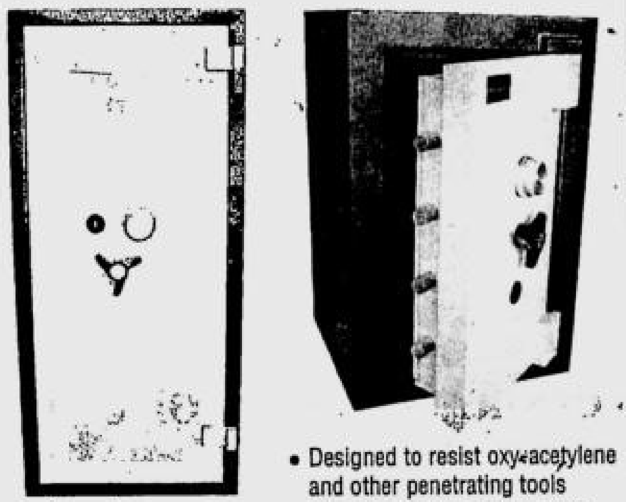

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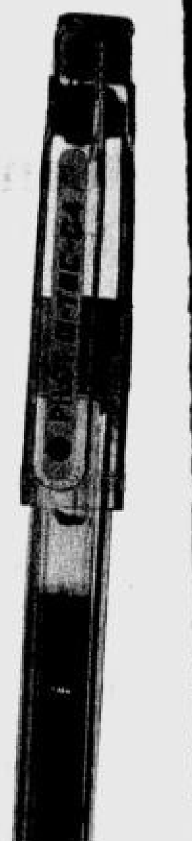

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Rebel suicide bombers kill 33 in Iraq

MOSUL, Iraq—Suicide bombers struck a police headquarters, an army base and a hospital around Mosul, killing 33 people in a setback to efforts to rebuild the northwestern city's police force that was riven by intimidation from insurgents seven months ago.

At least 14 people were killed in attacks elsewhere in Iraq on Sunday, including a US soldier whose convoy was hit by a roadside bomb in Baghdad, and six Iraqi soldiers who were gunned down outside their base north of the capital.

Early Monday, a roadside bomb exploded near an Iraqi police patrol in Antar Square in northern Baghdad's Azamiyah neighborhood, killing two civilians and wounding one more, police 1st Lt. Mohammed al-Hayali said.

Elsewhere, Iraqi police detained 48 suspected insurgents in Iskandriyah, Jibbala and Haswa in northern Hillah, police Capt. Muthana Khalid said. The three-day raid, which ended early Monday, took place in an area south of Baghdad and was part of "Operation Lightning." Police also seized weapons and a potential car bomb.

US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, meanwhile, said it may take as long as 12 years to defeat the insurgents. He said Iraq's security forces will have to finish the job because American and foreign troops will have left the country by then.

The attacks in Mosul, 360 km northwest of Baghdad, started early Sunday when a suicide bomber with explosives hidden beneath watermelons in a pickup truck slammed into a downtown police station near a market. US Army Capt. Mark Walter said 10 policemen and two civilians were killed.

Less than two hours later, a suicide bomber blew himself up in the parking lot of an Iraqi army base on Mosul's outskirts, killing 16 people, Walter said. Most of the victims were civilian workers arriving at the site, he said. Of the seven injured, one lost a leg and another was paralyzed from the waist down, the military said.

A third attacker strapped with explosives walked into Mosul's Jumhouri Teaching Hospital in the afternoon and blew himself up in a room used by police guarding the facility, killing five policemen.

An Associated Press reporter was outside the hospital when the explosion occurred, blowing a hole in a side of the building and injuring some police officers outside. Smoke then began pouring out of the hole, followed by flames.

Inside, dead police officers who apparently had been sleeping were sprawled in their underwear, their bodies and the walls peppered with ball bearings.

"I thought it was a mortar attack. I rushed to help and evacuate the dead. I picked up two legs and two hands. It seems they belonged to the bomber because we did not find a head or the rest of his body," said Ahmed Mohammed al-Hadidi, a hospital medic. *AP*

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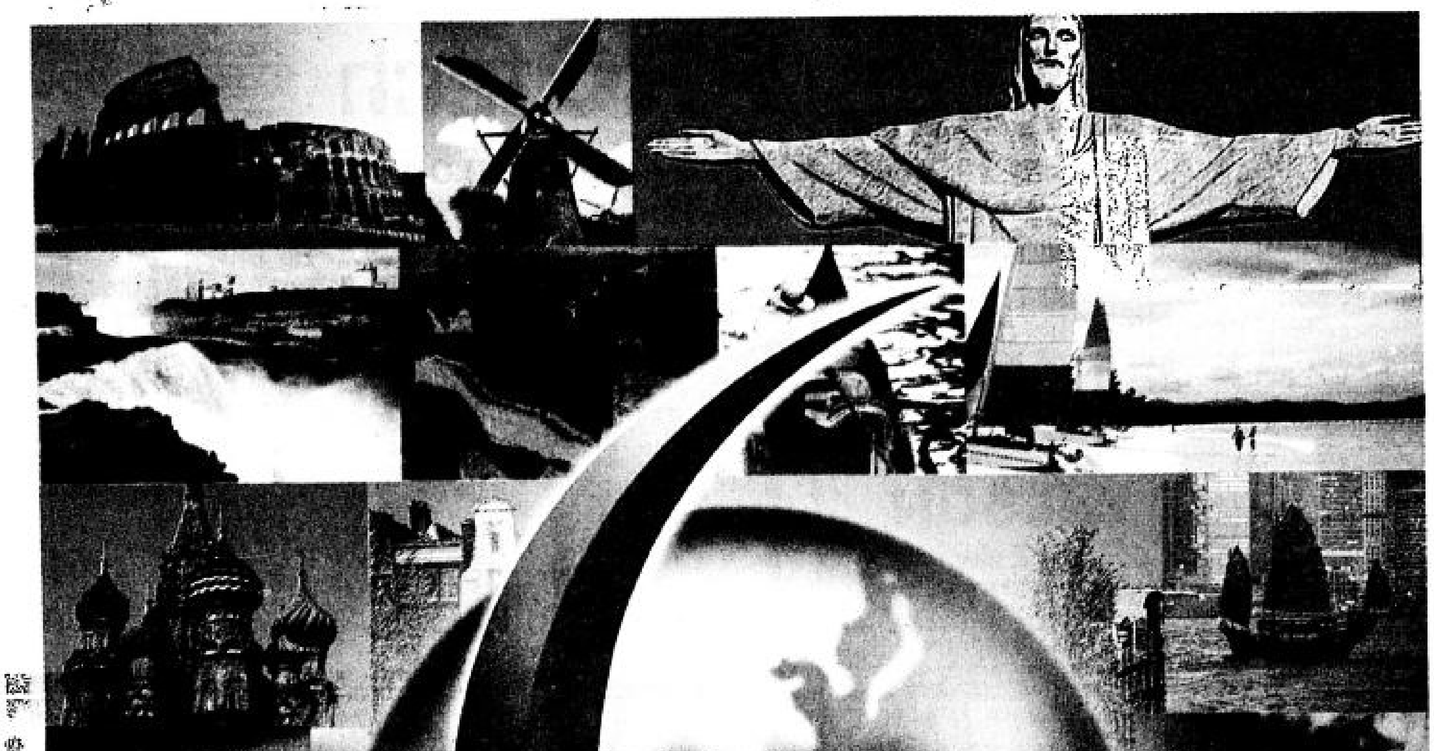

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Iran's new leader vows moderation, more nuke talks

TEHRAN—Iran's president-elect Mahmood Ahmadinejad on Sunday pledged to form a government of "moderation," saying Tehran would continue talks over its nuclear program and reach out to the international community.

But in the first news conference since his election win sent shockwaves around the world, the ultra-conservative Ahmadinejad said Iran had a right to pursue its nuclear activities and insisted it did not need ties with arch-enemy the United States.

Foreign governments had expressed worry over the election of the austere hardline Tehran mayor, particularly concerning Iran's nuclear program, and Ahmadinejad was at pains to present a conciliatory face to the world.

"Moderation will be the main policy of the government of 70 million people. There will be no place for extremism," he told hundreds of reporters packed into Tehran's town hall.

"This government will be a government of friendship and compassion. This government will be a government of justice and fairness, in the service of the people... whatever views they have."

But the 49-year-old president-elect, who looked perfectly relaxed under the media spotlight, signaled he had no interest in resuming dialogue with the United States. Tehran and Washington cut off relations after the Islamic revolution a quarter of a century ago.

"Iran is on a path of progress and elevation, and does not really need the United States on this path," he said, promising only to "work with any country in the world that does not show animosity to Iran."

In the most stunning political upset in Iranian history, Ahmadinejad trounced Rafsanjani, a veteran of Iran's theocracy, in Friday's second-round run-off with 61.69 percent of the vote—effectively slamming the door on any immediate moves for a rapprochement with Washington.

Rafsanjani has reacted furiously to his defeat, accusing regime hardliners of spending tens of millions of dollars to manipulate voters.

Ahmadinejad also moved to make reassuring noises about Iran's nuclear policy. The country is suspected of using an atomic energy drive as a cover for weapons development.

"Today we can say that nuclear technology is our right, to be used for peaceful purposes," said Ahmadinejad. *AFP*

Pakistani rape victim takes case to Supreme Court

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan—A Pakistani woman who was gang-raped on the orders of a village council launched an appeal Monday before Pakistan's Supreme Court against a ruling that acquitted five of her alleged attackers, her lawyer said.

Mukhtar Mai, 36, has won international praise for speaking out against her June 2002 assault that highlighted brutal forms of tribal justice still prevalent in parts of Pakistan. Rights activists have accused the government of trying to silence her.

Fearing bad publicity for the Islamic nation, President Gen. Pervez Musharraf recently barred Mai from visiting the United States to talk about her case—drawing strong criticism from Washington that prompted the government to lift the travel ban.

Mai came from her native Meerwala village, about 560 km to the southwest of Islamabad, to attend Monday's hearing.

"I am expecting the Supreme Court to give the same kind of ruling that was given by the special court," Mai, a yellow shawl covering her head, said outside the courtroom as she waited for her case to come up.

In June 2002, a council of elders in Meerwala ordered Mai's rape—punishing her for her 13-year-old brother's alleged affair with another woman.

Mai contends that allegation was made up to cover up a sexual assault against the boy by men from the woman's Mastoi clan.

Eschewing a culture of shame that often surrounds rape victims in Pakistan, Mai spoke out, leading to the conviction of six men, who were sentenced to death over the attack. Eight others were acquitted. *AP*

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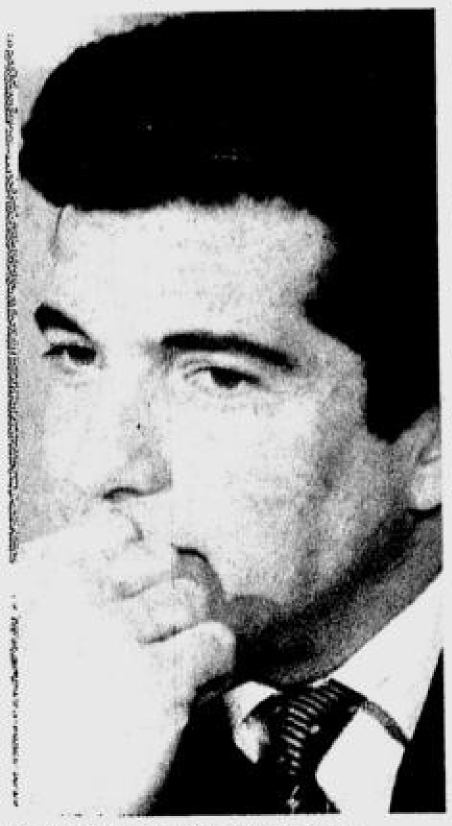
PRINCESS DIANA during her visit to Chicago, Illinois, June 1996.


JOHN F. KENNEDY JR. during a press conference in New York on March 9, 1999. AP

Princess Diana had fling with JFK Jr., book claims

LONDON—Princess Diana had a passionate affair with John F Kennedy Jr, according to a new book on the late former wife of Prince Charles.

Diana and Kennedy, who both died in tragic accidents in the 1990s, met in New York in 1995 when the son of the assassinated US president sought an interview with her for his magazine 'George,' the Sun newspaper reported Monday.

She refused but agreed to meet him in his luxury suite in the Manhattan hotel overlooking Central Park, according to Simmons, described by the paper as a "friend and confidante" of the late Princess of Wales.

Diana was "bowled over" by Kennedy's charm. "We started talking, one thing led to another and we ended up in bed together. It was pure chemistry," she is quoted as saying in Simmons book 'Diana: the last word.'

Also, according to the new biography, Diana thought the pair would make a great team and even entertained the idea of becoming the United States' first lady if he went into politics.

Upon her return to London, Diana had an astrological chart drawn up on Kennedy and concluded that they were not compatible enough to pursue a relationship, according to Simmons.

They remained in contact for some time before Kennedy married Carolyn Bessette the following year.

Diana was killed in 1997 in a car accident in Paris. Kennedy, his wife and her sister Lauren Bessette were all killed when the plane he was piloting crashed near Martha's Vineyard in July 1999.

AFP

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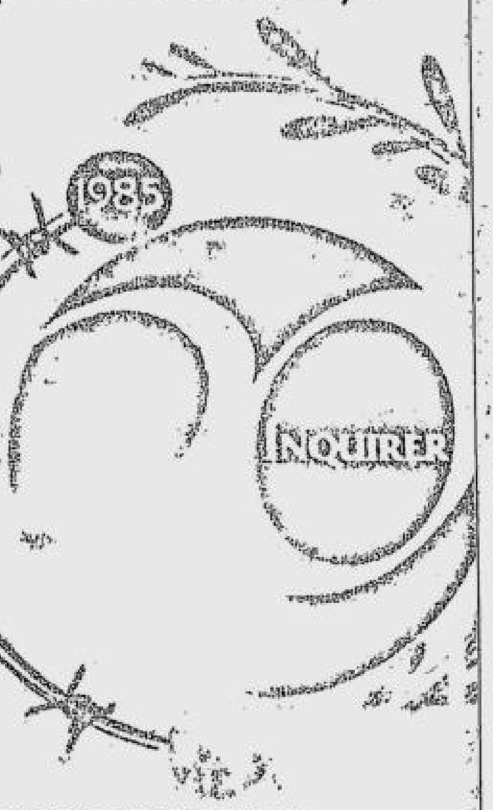

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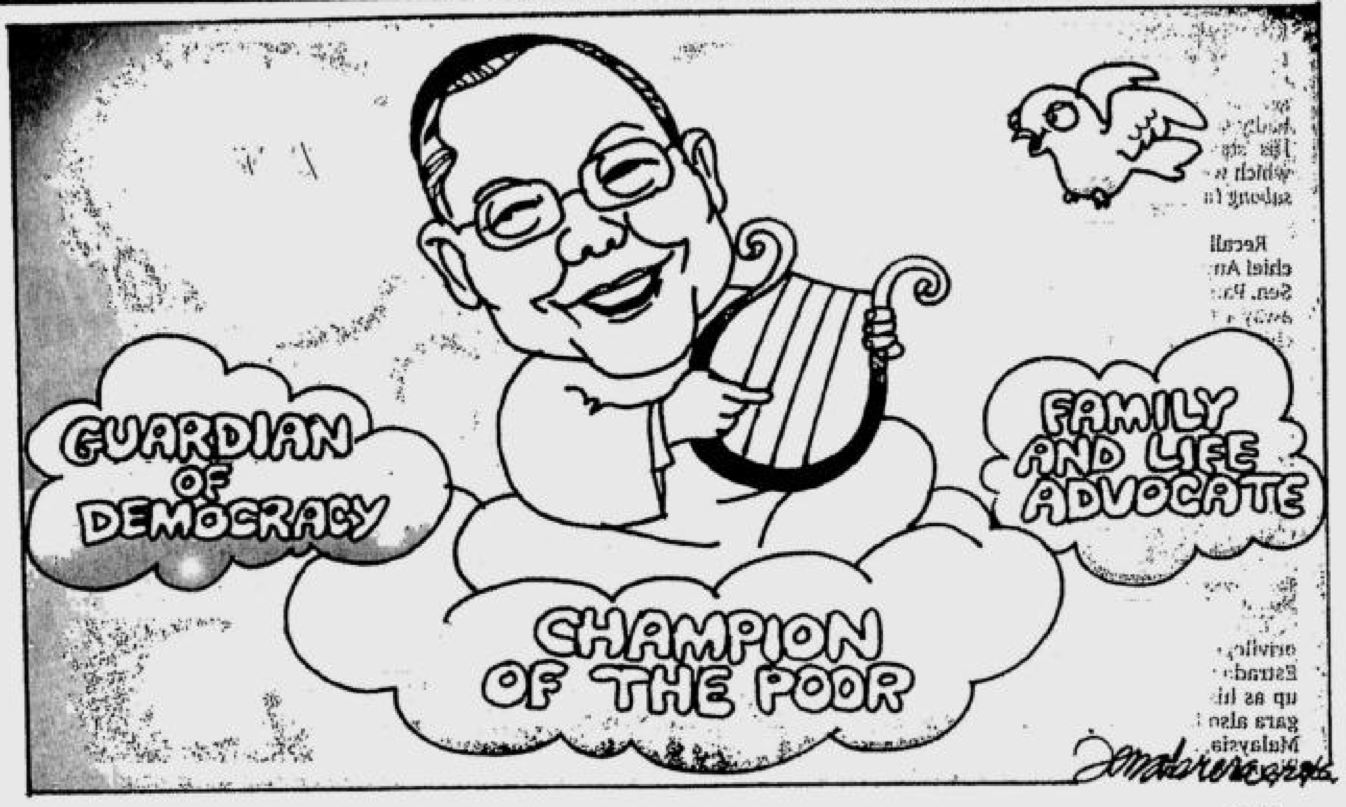

Worried about Noli

EDITORIAL

ONE thing that has made some people hesitate to ask that President Macapagal-Arroyo step down is the Noli de Castro factor. Last Thursday, a bishop and an official of a party-list group said no one wanted De Castro, a former radio-TV announcer, to succeed Ms Arroyo.

Manuel Loste, Bayan Muna national vice chair, said his group had suggested that "we move away from the limitations of the Constitution in unseating a president because we know Noli de Castro is simply not prepared to assume the task." A similar sentiment was expressed by retired Bishop Julio Labayen at a forum in UP Baguio.

We are not saying at this point that Ms Arroyo should be impeached, be made to step down peacefully or be ousted by another Edsa-type uprising. The fate of the President, who is reeling from the *jueteng* and tapes scandals, will have to be decided by herself, the politicians and the leaders of civil society. But the current political turmoil should make voters think again about the importance of electing a vice president who can step in and perform the functions of the president at a moment's notice.

The concept of the vice presidency, from the time of the Commonwealth up to the present, has been that of a "spare tire." Which requires that it be on hand at all times, ready to function the moment there is a blowout. This means that the spare tire has to be always in good running condition, for if it is defective, then it will not serve its purpose.

A review of the list of the country's vice presidents since President Manuel L. Quezon's time will show that most of them were qualified and prepared to assume the presidency. Quezon died of tuberculosis in 1944, and Vice President Sergio Osmeña succeeded him. President Manuel Roxas died from a heart attack in 1948, and Vice President Elpidio Quirino succeeded him. President Ramon Magsaysay died in a plane crash in 1957, and Vice President Carlos P. Garcia assumed the presidency.

President Diosdado Macapagal, who served out his term, had former Sen. Emmanuel Pelaez for his vice president. Ferdinand E. Marcos, who was elected president in 1965 and reelected in 1969, had Sen. Fernando Lopez as vice president. Corazon Aquino won the 1986 snap presidential election but was cheated by Marcos. She was later installed president by the Edsa I people power uprising. Her vice president was former Sen. Salvador H. Laurel.

President Fidel V. Ramos had former Sen. Joseph Estrada as vice president. In 1998 Estrada was elected president and former Sen. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, vice president. Like Aquino before her, Ms Arroyo was catapulted to the presidency by a people power uprising. As early as that time, some people already expressed a dislike for her. Some protesters said: "Resign All." But the call for both Mr. Estrada and Ms Arroyo to resign did not catch fire, for the urgent objective then was to immediately remove a President who was perceived to be corrupt and incompetent.

Now there are calls for the ouster of President Arroyo, but some quarters are having second thoughts because they are not sure if the Vice President is qualified to take over the reins of government. Some are again pushing for the "Resign all" formula.

Unlike in previous years when seasoned and experienced senators and congressmen such as Osmeña, Quirino, Garcia, Macapagal, Pelaez, Lopez and Laurel were elected vice president, the past three elections saw candidates of disputable professional or moral qualities being chosen to be the "spare tire" of the president. Lately, popularity, name recall and "winnability" have been the most important factors in nominating and electing vice presidents. That the Vice President is a "spare tire," ready to take over the presidency any time the president dies, falls seriously ill, is unable to discharge the functions of his office, resigns or is removed through impeachment or any other cause, means that he or she should have similar qualifications and experience as the president. There is no time for him or her to go through an "internship" or "practicum" while the affairs of state wait for immediate action and decision.

When President Ramos underwent an operation on the carotid in 1996, people were appalled at the thought that Estrada might succeed him. Now some people are entertaining a similar fear. What if Arroyo resigns or is removed by whatever means? The prospect of a De Castro presidency is giving some people pause and making them weigh their options very carefully.

Protracted crisis

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

SORRY, but this is an "are-those-not-cliffs-ahead?" column. It's not about *jueteng* or wire-tapped tapes. Rather, it deals with the story stashed in the inside pages, but nevertheless already altering our lives and bringing this clueless nation—and the world, as we know it—to its knees.

It's about $60-a-barrel oil.

"Crude rose to $60.02 before settling down at $59.80," Agence France Presse reported over the weekend. That same barrel cost less than $5 before the oil crises of the 1970s.

That $60-barrel price already saps budgets in inflated jeepney fares or expensive medicine and food. But many still are afflicted by the "Jiminy Cricket syndrome", i.e. "If you wish for anything hard enough, it will come true."

Thus, some people think a seamless transition from fossil fuels to "alternative renewables" is around the corner. Others assume the problem will go away.

Well, it won't, James Howard Kunstler asserts in "The Long Emergency." The cheap-fossil-fuel era is over. And that will reshape our lives and world in ways we haven't grasped yet.

Reliable supplies of cheap oil and natural gas underpin much of modern life, from cars and airplanes to fertilizer and air-conditioning for malls. But the taps are tightening.

A permanent energy crisis could interlock with disruptions of climate change, epidemic disease and population overshoot, Kunstler asserts. "We're in for a rough ride through uncharted territory."

His analysis is anchored to the "global oil-production peak," the point when world production inexorably declines. That's after the world pumps most oil it will produce in a given year.

The United States passed its oil peak of 11 million barrels daily in 1970. Since then, it imports about two-thirds of the oil it burns, as production dropped steadily. (The Philippines depends on imports.)

In response, non-Opec oil, especially from the North Sea fields of England and Norway, was tapped. "They saved the West's ass for about two decades," Kunstler says. "Since 1999, these fields have entered depletion."

"Worldwide discovery of new oil, meanwhile, steadily declined." Soon, foreign producers, chiefly Opec, were writing the price tags.

"The world never faced a problem like this," the US Energy Department stated in a March report. "Without massive mitigation more than a decade before the fact, the problem will be pervasive and will not be temporary."

The "peak" represents the halfway point of the world's all-time total endowment. That's when half the world's oil will be left. And that still seems a lot.

But there's a big catch. That half is much more difficult to extract. It's costlier to pump and of poorer quality. The oil fields are located in strife-savaged areas. "A substantial amount will never be extracted."

A global oil-production peak is complicated by burgeoning demand from China and India, which compounds pressures. The US has attempted desperately to stabilize the Middle East—which contains two-thirds of the world's remaining oil supplies—"by, in effect, opening a big police station in Iraq." But what if China, which became the world's second-greatest consumer of oil in 2004, opened a similar "police station" in oil-producing former Soviet republics in Central Asia?

The debate continues, except probably in a Philippines obsessed with politics. Will the peak occur, as some say, in 2010? They point to Shell Oil's erroneous estimate of its reserves. Saudi Arabia can't goose up production despite promises to do so. Nigeria and Venezuela are volatile. "2005 is apt to be the year of all-time global peak production," Klustner thinks.

Maybe so. But consequences from a "Long Emergency" are emerging. The automobile could be a diminished presence. Gigantic airports, like JFK, Frankfurt, Heathrow, Narita, Changi, may shrink as airlines trim fleets. Thousands of oil-based "common" products, from paints to medicines, will become scarce and costlier. Social and commercial patterns will be radically reordered. Long-distance markets will be priced out. Industrial agriculture may falter due to a scarcity of oil- and gas-based inputs. More food will be grown closer to where people live on smaller scale.

Will the 21st century center on agriculture, not on high-tech information? "This is no doubt a startling, radical idea. And it raises extremely difficult questions about reallocation of land and other resources."

Most would like to keep the lights on. For them, what are the options?

Alternative and renewable fuels range from hydrogen, biomass, coal, solar to wind, as the new Ilocos wind farm signals. Or you go nuclear in the teeth of Three Mile Island and Chernobyl.

Problems of technology arise. Today's huge truck and car fleets won't be replaced by vehicles run on fuel cells soon. Solar-electric systems and wind turbines face problems of scale. Coal is "dirty." The Nazis made synthetic oil from coal using vast armies of slave labor. And uranium for nuclear plants is a limited resource.

"Survivors of the Long Emergency will have to cultivate a religion of hope—that is, a deep and comprehensive belief that humanity is worth carrying on" Klustner writes.

But is our country, bogged down as it is in *jueteng* and wiretaps, thinking in those terms?

Legal and moral

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

REP. ALAN Peter Cayetano says snap elections can happen only if Noli de Castro resigns along with GMA. Raul Roco and Aquilino Pimentel suggest the same thing but make it voluntary on the part of the Vice President. De Castro, Roco said, is merely the spare tire of a car that GMA has lost control of and is driving straight into the cliffs. He should resign *por la patria* (for the country), Roco said, invoking Jose Rizal.

Well, that will take some humongous coaxing. I've heard the same thought expressed by some lawyer friends of mine. If we're to have snap elections, they say, De Castro should resign as well because his votes are tainted as well. Indeed, not just De Castro but all the other nationally elected officials. All of which presents a thorny Gordian Knot, which cannot be easily sliced by a sword.

But I personally can't see why snap elections should be possible only if De Castro resigns as well. It misses the point. The point is that GMA rigged the elections with the collusion of one of the top officials of the Comelec. Or to go by insider talk in the Comelec, the top official of the electoral body, the most senior commissioner whose tenure goes back to Marcos' time—he cut his jagged teeth there, a shameful past he boasts about. Can there still be any doubt about the authenticity of the tape or the identities of the parties in the conversation? I did say God in his infinite wisdom gave GMA that exceptionally distinctive voice. The only way Iggy Arroyo can sound like her is for him to use Darth Vader's voice box.

But the point is that GMA rigged the elections and therefore whether she actually won or not, she has invalidated her votes. She has voided her claim to the presidency. That is what we are asking her to resign for, or be impeached. The others did not cheat in the elections, or at least we do not have proof they did. We can only presume good faith on their part. If they benefited from GMA's cheating, that is not their fault. Why should they be punished for it?

No, we can have snap elections only for president. That has the added virtue of driving home the point that no (wo)man is above the law, not even a president.

All this presumes, of course, that GMA will go gentle into the night and not rage against the dying of the light. Resignation is out of the question, though I still believe in calling for it for its dramatic, if not practical, value. It may fall on deaf ears among the occupants of the Palace by the Pasig but it won't fall on deaf ears among the inhabitants of the Pearl of the Orient. It makes a point about being *manhid*. But there are more practical ways to get GMA to step down.

Impeachment is one of them. Pimentel, of course, warns that Malacañang is trying to bait the opposition into taking the impeachment route because it has the numbers in Congress and can always vote it down. Maybe so, but it's still worth trying. GMA—and Jose de Venecia—may have congressmen in their pockets but those congressmen are not entirely invulnerable to public resentment. Which could matter in elections. GMA's levels of unpopularity are rising exponentially by the day. The people may not be storming into the streets to oust her but they are seething inside each time they hear her by now (in)famous voice. The politicians who stuck by Marcos to the end ended up with GAD. No one worships GAD anymore.

But the surer and more potent source of public pressure is the one suggested by Rene Saguisag, which is a tax boycott. Gabriel Claudio, the presidential adviser on political affairs, is aghast at the suggestion. "I don't see how you can draw a comparison between not paying taxes and the President holding her silence," he said. And he added: "Politics is one thing, economic sabotage and blackmail are another."

He should have told that to Rolando Librojo, one of Kompil II's convenors, who said quite openly shortly before Erap was ousted: "We are starting calibrated workers' actions leading to a general strike and the first call is for workers to participate in the rallies. We are also calling for a transport strike outside Metro Manila…We talked about tax boycotts and boycott of the two banks. Equitable PCI could not be included because there was the concern that Social Security System (a provident fund for employees in the private sector) placed its money there." To this day, Librojo has not been charged with economic sabotage and blackmail.

When Librojo said that, Erap was charged only with stealing *jueteng* money; he wasn't charged with stealing people's votes. The second was something he could never be charged with. GMA is charged with both, the second above all. At the time Librojo said that Erap's impeachment trial wasn't over, he hadn't been found guilty, the Senate-turned-court had just refused to open the second envelope. Today, a tape of GMA's conversation with Garcillano is going the rounds of the country, making her, as the text joke goes, the most popular entertainer of all time, her CD having broken records in sales and piracy.

I've asked before why we should pay taxes when GMA had just used our taxes to campaign (the Pagcor and PCSO ads are ironclad proof of it), when she cannot even protect journalists from being murdered (which shows our taxes do not return in terms of basic services), when she has turned the country into the second most corrupt country in Asia (which proves taxes satisfy private avarice rather than public need). That was well before Archbishop Oscar Cruz brought witnesses to show her husband and son were the godfathers of *jueteng* and Sammy Ong brought out The Tape to show she was the godmother of cheating.

That isn't legal and moral ground for a tax boycott?

Investing in the youth's future

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SEN. Edgardo Angara says I was wrong in citing him as saying soon after the elections of May 2004 that the reason the opposition lost was that it was badly divided. He now is repeating the opposition line that the reason it lost was due to electoral fraud. But Angara cannot deny that soon after the elections, he actually blamed the badly split state of the opposition for its defeat. His statement was widely covered by media which were eager to engage him and Lacson in a *sabong* (as the media always do).

* * *

Recall that even during the campaign LDP chief Angara made no effort to hide his anger at Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who belonged to the breakaway action, for defying his call for unity. The architect of Fernando Poe Jr.'s candidacy, Angara tried his best to get Lacson to back out of the presidential race or run for vice president with FPJ, but the intransigent ex-cop refused either offer. Bitter exchanges continued between them after the elections. Lacson's presidential ambition proved costly to the opposition, allowing Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to sprint past her closest rival, FPJ, with Lacson landing a poor third.

Now Angara says it was not the opposition split but electoral fraud that caused its defeat. But this is not the first time he reversed himself. I recall that in the early '90s he delivered a privilege speech lambasting then Sen. Joseph Estrada as unfit for the presidency, only to end up as his executive secretary. For a while Angara also had unflattering words about FPJ in Malaysia, but later turned around and became his principal backer.

* * *

The opposition's split was not the only factor for its defeat. As we political commentators noted then, and as GMA's political adviser, Gabby Claudio, recently pointed out in an ANC forum, in many areas the FPJ group had no local candidates, forcing him to altogether skip those areas during the campaign. This lack of support hurt FPJ and indeed might have encouraged the cheating that some GMA leaders in Mindanao allegedly resorted to. By contrast, GMA's machinery was formidable mainly because of the support of the local politicians whom she had pampered with projects during her first three years as President. FPJ ran mainly on the strength of his enormous popularity, but toward the homestretch that appeal failed to compensate for some of the blunders his camp committed during the campaign, affecting the flow of funds to him. These included his stony silence on basic issues, which caused dismay to his business supporters, and his quarrels with the media.

* * *

At this point, the question is, were those tapes conclusive in pointing out that GMA had "ordered" Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to cheat for her? If one listens to Gabby Claudio and Environment Secretary Mike Defensor, their boss didn't have to cheat to win. Were these tapes concocted to show she cheated? We're still at that question, and the nation awaits GMA's statement. Incidentally, in that TV program, Claudio stressed a point which may not be insignificant: the "tape" allegedly showed GMA talking to "Garci" on May 24, but that was the day Congress ended the canvassing and proclaimed her winner. *Tila nagkamali sa date.*

* * *

Earlier I cited the talk of Ayala Group CEO Jaime Zobel de Ayala before foreign investors in Singapore, where he cited the gains and strengths of the Philippine economy, such as its more than 5 percent projected growth for this year and the predominantly young labor force. Zobel stressed that our key strength is the fact that over 60 percent of our population is in the 25 years and above age group, unlike many developed countries whose populations are aging. He decried, however, that this asset has not been exploited well by our leaders.

* * *

I also cited the lament of Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri that most of the country's over five million unemployed are in the 25-34 age group, which is the peak level of productivity. Neri said the big scale of joblessness in the youthful labor force is aggravated by the fact that jobs cannot be created fast enough to cope with its growth. This is where foreign investments could come in if only the political situation stabilizes.

Also worrisome is a trend noted by Yvonne T. Chua of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. In a series of articles, Chua noted that in many schools across the country, female students are left in the classrooms while many of the boys are kept away for a number of reasons. One reason boys are forced to quit school is that they have to work early in their lives in order to supplement family incomes, or they simply are uninterested in going to school. This is a most serious development which ought to be reversed, since it would only aggravate the lack of preparation and training of the male students, who will be the major breadwinner in their future families. This means wasting away the invaluable youth asset Zobel was talking about.

* * *

In this connection, I'd like to appeal for help for Erda Technical Vocational High School (Erda-Tech), which was founded by Fr. Pierre Tritz over a decade ago in Pandacan. The school is dedicated to giving students from the poorest families in Metro Manila free high school education as well as training in one of about 12 technical skills such as carpentry, automotive repair, electrical, computer studies, baking, etc. The idea is to train them in a particular skill so that right after graduation they can be gainfully employed. This school year Erda-Tech has 497 students enrolled, which will cost it a total of about P12.4 million. Sponsorship is P25,000 per student. Father Tritz was able to raise sponsorships for 378 students and pledges for 48 more students, but he needs sponsors for about 79 more students in their freshman year. Invest in our Filipino youth. Call Father Tritz at 564-1856 and 564-2608.

Escape from the 'heat'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

BAGUIO—It's a short, easy, five-hour drive to this city up in the mountains, especially with the super-smooth and fast drive through the North Luzon Expressway. Once in this city, however, one feels a hundred miles away, in a different country.

One left Manila in a funk, one's ears tuned to radio coverage of a Senate hearing on the continuing *jueteng* controversy, and just before that, to an acrimonious congressional investigation of the "Gloriagate" tapes. Conversations on the way north centered on these twin controversies, political gossip of conspiracies and cover-ups, speculations on regime change and possible coups filling in the empty hours until we reached our destination.

But in Baguio, amid the calming scenery often blanketed by fog and the easygoing pace of the city, one's attention lags. The President has let loose a mouthful on everything from upstart opponents to organized conspiracies without answering questions on most everyone's mind: Is it her voice on the tapes? And did she really conspire with an election official to alter the outcome of the presidential elections? Meanwhile, even as the prospect of regime change looms, no worthy leader is emerging. There is a legal, duly elected successor in the person of the Vice President, but people seem as leery of a Noli de Castro presidency as they are of five more years of GMA. Resignation, impeachment, snap elections, military takeover, people power? In the last few days, the dismal multiple choices for our future haven't seemed as imperative as they were the day we left Manila.

"What's happening to our country?" friends in Baguio have asked me. But their questions don't have the edge of despair with which folks in Manila have phrased this query. Instead, there is only bemused curiosity. Is this emotional distance only because of their physical distance from the capital?

TV, radio and newspapers are just as accessible here as they are in Manila. Perhaps it's more psychological distance, a detachment from affairs in Manila and therefore from the complexities of national politics that provincial folk have long maintained.

* * *

IN METRO Manila, one can't even walk to the street corner without hearing a "Hello, Garci" ringtone, overhear a heated conversation on the veracity of the tapes, have one's ears assaulted by the strident tones of radio commentators, or even get stuck in traffic as one passes a street protest.

In e-groups, one can almost see the handwringing going on, as messages overflow with righteous anger and exasperation, puzzlement at the present and fear of the future, irritation with the President and her apologists and suspicion of the motives of those behind the ouster moves.

Sometimes, I envy folks on both ends of the opinion spectrum, the true believers and the proto-executioners who back up their convictions with the certainty of absolute truth. My own attitude, and I am sure it's one shared by the majority, is a desire to get at the truth underlined with anxiety at what lies ahead. We would all rest easy if only our present crop of leaders, the "bench" of our political elite, were deeper and presented more alternatives. Is there someone out there who commands enough respect and whose integrity is unassailable to command the allegiance of the citizenry? And will even such a person of charisma, leadership and moral ascendancy be able to lead our fractious country and our even more intransigent politicians?

And if we cannot find such a person—or persons—will it now be a case of better the devil we know, than the devil we do not know?

* * *

IN THIS bad-news environment, this piece of good news comes as a welcome respite.

The photo of the President with three rescued Filipino hostages—Angelo de la Cruz, Angelito Nayan and Roberto Tarongoy—whose return home last week was the reason for the impromptu "reunion," would have been, in another climate, enough reason for celebration. Where other countries have had to endure their nation's mourning for citizens killed after they had been kidnapped in war-torn areas, here we have three Filipino hostages brought home safe and sound in the wake of discreet negotiations and diplomatic maneuvering.

The cost to the country of the three men's repatriation cannot yet be measured, not while the full story behind their release has yet to be told. But there are commentators who speculate that President Macapagal-Arroyo's present plight can be traced to her decision to pull out Filipino troops from Iraq to meet the demands of De la Cruz's kidnappers. Breaking away from the coalition of the willing, did GMA end up paving the way for the current crisis besetting her administration?

* * *

TARONGOY, or his family, could not be blamed if they felt a bit shortchanged by the relatively tepid reception to his arrival. Granted, it was unexpected and came in the middle of a political typhoon. But the awful truth is that he was no longer a novelty, the two other hostages having preceded him and taken their place in the limelight. Besides, his ordeal at the hands of his captors had lasted too long, such that even the attentions of the obsessive media inevitably waned.

Still, the Tarongoys should see the silver lining in all this. The lack of public attention, as exemplified by media blanket coverage, is a real blessing, as it has allowed him to rejoin his family and readjust to his native environment in privacy and at leisure. Compare his homecoming with that of De la Cruz, whose family and neighborhood were under siege even as officials carried out delicate negotiations for his release. In this politically heated season, such blessings cannot be so easily overlooked.

Manila 1859 (2)

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

(This article gives you an idea why Daniel Burnham described Manila as another Venice. Aside from names of towns, streets and bridges that are no more, it also projects a topography alien to its present features but it may impart an image of the city of our ancestors.)

THE RIVER Tala or Tanza divides Manila from Bulacan and discharges into the bay in the towns of Malabon or Tambobo and its barrio of Tonsuyo. At this point, from the confluence of various rivulets and streams, the lake called Dagat-dagatan is formed. A branch line, following a north-to-south direction, subdivides into various others and meanders through the neighborhoods of the town of Tondo where there is a place called Gayalangui with a small spring of sweet water.

It enters into Binondo through the bridge called Aceiteros, divides the streets parallel to those of Jolo and Anloague and exits into the Pasig near Manila Bay above the bridge they call Grande. Before that, it passes under another bridge that crosses from the church of Binondo to the streets of San Fernando and Sto. Cristo. On the right banks of the Pasig near Manila, an infinity of rivulets or streams with many windings and detours flow around the towns of Quiapo, San Miguel, Sta. Cruz and Binondo

The stream that passes through Tondo and Binondo separates into various branches before reaching the Aceiteros Bridge, uniting on its left banks with another that flows through the *visitas* and barrios of Tutuban, San Rafael, San Nicolas and Sta. Cruz. Past the bridge, it is joined by the esteros that surround the island of Meisic, slipping under the bridge called de la Magdalena or de Trozo, which from the barrio of Trozo (in the town of San Jose) goes to Dulungbayan in Sta. Cruz.

Another arm of the arroyo that forms around Meisic receives water from another branch that descends from the north and together they surround the island of Sibacon, which together with the island of Romero makes up the town of Santa Cruz. These two esteros then flow under the bridge called Visita in the Escolta that connects to Sta. Cruz and from there spill out to the Pasig. Other rivulets pass under the Sibacon Bridge, including another that originates from San Lazaro and San Jose which runs under the new span called Urrejola behind the Tribunal.

A plain exists between the town of Santa Cruz and the barrio of San Sebastian, where another current divides itself into two branches. One of these branches foes into Santa Cruz beside the street called Quiotan where there is a bridge to the island of Romero and later crosses under the Carriedo Bridge on the street of Real de Quiapo going toward General Crespo and passing through another bridge beside the Alcaldia of the province before veering to the left and discharging into the Pasig.

The other arm descends from Quiapo and has a bridge over it at the entrance of the Calzada of San Sebastian beyond which it meanders along the backs of the houses in Gunao. It merges with three other streams in front of the church of San Sebastian and together they flow behind the houses fronting the church.

A new bridge in Looban that leads to Curtidor spans another rivulet that passes through the landing beside another bridge found at the end of the Calzada of San Sebastian, isolating the houses there.

Once these streams unite, they exit into the Pasig through the De la Quinta Bridge that also leads to San Miguel. Before reaching that barrio, there is a picturesque isle in front of which the streams are joined by an estero that is born above the northern part of the town of Sampaloc. Following its currents parallel to the back of the houses, it passes under the bridge of Marquez with a branch that extends in front of the church of San Sebastian where it unites with the others.

Another arm goes toward San Miguel and turns to the right discharging in front of Isla de la Convalecencia beside the bridge of La Quinta. Still another branch opens into the Pasig near the barrio of Ule-ule where a rivulet born in the pastures of Nagtahan forms a confluence with them.

Between the immediate outskirts of Parañaque and this branch of the River Pasig, a small but very long brook with little water drifts which due to its tortuous turns that resemble intestines is called Tripa de Gallina. It flows under the bridges of Dilao and Paco as well as another bridge called de las Damas between Paco and Santa Ana and joins the Pasig in front of the Isla de la Convalecencia.

Another small stream known as the Bago River divides the towns of Paco and Malate through San Anton and forms salt beds behind these town. A branch runs parallel to the Paseo de la Calzada, discharging into the Pasig in the place of San Miguel el Viejo and from there a short arm called Canal de Balete passes under two small bridges.

Beside the town of San Juan del Monte is a spring from which flow medicinal waters that are much in demand in Manila and its suburbs.

Another spring of mineral water containing iron descends from the skirts of a hill covered by the most luxurious vegetation beside the town of Mariquina. It is famous because of its medicinal properties.

(Data from La Ilustracion Filipina, 1859).

Blame Nora

YOUNG BLOOD

Hans Lerwyn R. Villarica

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

REMEMBER the last days of Pope John Paul II when he was seriously ill? How about the days leading up to his historic funeral? If you don't remember any of these because you were busy watching "The Buzz" and not CNN, then you should join me in blaming Nora.

As the nation's superstar, Nora Aunor has always had her fair share of intrigues. Her award-winning acting prowess irked Vilmanians, and perhaps Vilma Santos herself, in the 1980s and their rivalry was definitely newsworthy. Her alleged obsessive gambling was also a favorite topic of gossip, tarnishing her goody-goody image and revealing to the public her many outstanding debts. During the last elections, she once again made entertainment headlines when she turned her back on old showbiz-inspired political alliances.

These days, however, Nora has been drawing much unwanted attention to herself not because of a rumor but because of an actual incident: her arrest for drug possession in the Los Angeles Airport. As airport personnel were conducting a thorough search for anything that may be used in a terrorist attack (this includes your hair conditioner), they found Nora's small black film canister. A quick examination showed it contained eight grams of shabu.

Everyone knows what happened next: Nora was arrested but was later freed after posting bail of $10,000. Her lady lawyer is now defending her in some court proceedings and trying to clear her name by declaring that someone had set her up.

What bothers me more than the undeserved media mileage Nora has been receiving and we Filipinos are being unfairly subjected to is the reaction of the people who fancy themselves to be Noranians. It seems that most of these people are willing to overlook what actually happened (she was caught trying to board an airplane with allegedly an illegal substance in her possession) so that their idol can continue to make more movies for their viewing pleasure. Never mind if she may actually be a drug user or if she may have attempted to smuggle drugs across borders or that she has become a bad example to her younger fans or that she probably placed other Filipino travelers on the watch list for potential smugglers and terrorists in all American airports.

She must be innocent because she's just super.

Blame Sharon

I BLAME the stars for my current disappointment with Philippine fashion. I blame the megastar, to be more specific. Yes, I am referring to the sweet Filipino idol named Sharon.

It all started some time near the beginning of the new millennium when Sharon Cuneta, unconsciously or not, decided to lose and subsequently regain her weight for an indefinite period of time. Naturally, being the entertainment figure that she is (no pun intended), she felt that she had to discuss her weight issues not unlike another ubiquitous talk show hosts across the Pacific.

We all know what happened next. She lost the weight, gained it back, lost some more weight, gained some more back, and so on and so forth. In the course of all of this nonsensical and extremely unhealthy weight bouncing, she introduced to the public concealer clothes—that is, garments meant to hide the curves of a woman, particularly their midsection or fatty areas. These are the pashmina, the poncho, the shrug and especially the loose blouse that hangs off one side of the torso just enough to gracefully reveal some shoulder flesh while camouflaging any other curves below.

As a result, everyone has been wearing these Sharonian garb. In formal social events, one will always see an old lady covering herself up with a shawl even though it is summertime in our humid, tropical country. In school, even young ladies are wearing that one-size-fits-all blouse to class.

When will the insanity stop? My fingers have certainly been crossed for some time now.

These clothes have served their purpose. They have given the bodily insecure the opportunity to show some skin and appear sexy in a very clever way. They have allowed clothing retailers to produce glorified towels and large-sized, ill-fitting shirts at a big mark-up. Indirectly, through Sharon's winning example, they have even propagated the use of sneaky outer wear as an alternative to a healthy diet and regular exercise.

If some people still feel compelled to argue this point with me, consider this: Maureen Larrazabal was wearing that blouse on a recent episode of "Bubble Gang." I'm betting that even Sharon must have found that sight unnerving.

Hans Lerwyn R. Villarica, 22, is BS Management graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

THEY SAID

Sin's cross

"Like every Filipino, he felt how we have suffered a lot because of all these politicking, all these quarrels and these political maneuverings of leaders on both sides."

—Fr. Rufino Secson on the late Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin

No vacuum

"I don't think there'd be a vacuum. Bishops today remain socially involved. The possibility of people power did not die with Sin. People power remains a possibility so long as the mass movement continues."

—Bagong Alyansang Makabayan secretary general Renato Reyes on the effect of Sin's passing

Common sense

"It's pure common sense. The key element for development is honesty. How can people follow you if you're lying?"

—Former senator and presidential candidate Raul Roco on suggestions that President Macapagal-Arroyo should resign

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Last stab at democracy

THE *JUETENG* and election scandals now look like a ticking political time bomb. I fear the day when people's patience reaches its limit and a crowd of people-power magnitude rushes to the streets in blind outrage—united in demanding the ouster of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, but divided on the question of who is going to replace her.

Political uncertainty and economic collapse—these are now the knives with which the administration holds hostage the Filipino people. Without these, Ms Arroyo would have been zapped out of Malacañang by people power long ago.

Anyway, the standoff is causing us more and more suffering day after day.

Let us leave it to the administration to fight for its almost impossible survival. But a definite agenda for change should be in the works as soon as possible by those who no longer have the moral nerve to support the present government so that the country can immediately arrest our economic downfall and restore investor confidence.

I don't think our economy can suffer the stress of a long impeachment process. Besides, if it's true that GMA cheated, then she is not a legitimate President in the first place.

In principle, the election scandal demands nullification of the results of the presidential and vice-presidential elections. However, I'm not very optimistic that a change of leaders through snap elections will free our country from the vicious cycle of traditional politics, corruption and poverty. (This we have learned after Edsa I and II.) Unless we are able to elect a God-fearing, extraordinary president with no big economic stake in the status quo, the snap elections could be the last try at democracy.

In case there would be no snap elections, we could go for the next relatively peaceful option—a transition coalition government of civilians representing all nationalistic sectors—although this is not guaranteed to be without risk. Let us just think that a political risk is an investment for a higher yield. I hope all the forces desiring change can get their act together to work for this kind of transitory government.

The coalition can lay the plans for the establishment of the best form of elective government, which should be revolutionary in character (such a government was not taken advantage of by the Aquino government), to push for a new Constitution that will favor the majority by espousing genuine land reform and mandating the repudiation of illegitimate foreign debts.

If we don't take the second option, we might as well leave everything to the Left, which is more organized and has a more definite agenda for change.

—ADI BAEN SANTOS,
108E F. Roxas St., Caloocan City

Electricity cheaper if Napocor-sourced

IN A LETTER (PDI, 6/11/05), Elpi Cuna Jr., vice president of Meralco, claimed that Napocor's cost of power in March 2005 was P5.6943 per kWh inclusive of P1.5549 per kWh transmission-related costs.

The fact is Napocor's effective generation rate in March 2005 was P3.9384 per kWh. This is the amount we billed all our customers in Luzon, including Meralco.

Meralco's generation charge for the month of April 2005 was P4.5259 per kWh. (Meralco's monthly bills reflect all cost components of the electricity consumed.)

In May 2005, Napocor billed all Luzon customers an effective generation rate of P4.4080 per kWh, inclusive of the 47-centavo increase that the Energy Regulatory Commission approved in April 2005. Meralco, for its part, billed its customers a generation charge of P4.5348 per kWh, exclusive of Napocor's 47-centavo increase. Normally, movements in Napocor's rates are reflected in the bills of Meralco customers one month later.

Cuna's assertion that Napocor's cost of power was P5.6943 per kWh inclusive of the P1.5549-per-kWh transmission-related costs stems from Meralco's own business decision to allocate certain costs not related to power generation or transmission.

Apparently, Meralco included the penalties (incurred for failing to meet the energy levels it requested) in computing Napocor's generation charge for March. (P4.1394 per kWh, about 20 centavos more than Napocor's effective rate of P3.9384 per kWh). For March 2005, Meralco's requested energy level was 1,000 gWh. Of this figure, Meralco lifted only 915 gWh. Meralco failed to meet its requested energy level because it opted to source it from its own IPPs.

Cuna lumped the generation and transmission charges—even as the industry had started to "unbundle" the electricity rates into its different cost components as required under the law—to make it appear that Napocor's generation rates, combined with the transmission charges of the National Transmission Corp., are higher than the combined generation rates and transmission charges of Meralco IPPs.

As figures from the previous and succeeding months would show, electricity rates become cheaper if the distributor sources more power from Napocor. (In December 2004 when Meralco got 68.76 percent of its power requirements from Napocor, Meralco's combined rate was P7.0964 per kWh—or P6.0833 per kWh generation rate and P1.0131 per kWh transmission cost; while Napocor's combined rate was only P4.8623 per kWh—or P3.9384 per kWh generation rate and P0.9239 per kWh transmission cost).

Moreover, the transmission charge for Napocor-generated power progressively dropped as Meralco lifted more power from Napocor—from an average of P1.4455 per kWh in March 2005 when Meralco lifted 915 gWh from Napocor to P1.0663 per kWh in April (for 1,236 gWh) and P0.9452 per kWh in May (for 1,445 gWh).

—ALMA P. HERMOSURA,
Corporate Communication Division,
National Power Corp.,
corner Quezon Avenue
and Agham Road,
Diliman, Quezon City

THE EVIL CONTINU
PRESIDENT

COMMUTERS walk past the "Valentina" poster near Philcoa in Quezon City

Valentina posters not illegal

THE "VALENTINA" poster, which prompted the arrest and filing of inciting-to-sedition charges against students and the raid of a printing press, was conceptualized and designed by the Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) as part of the National Day of Protest to be held on June 30.

The Freedom from Debt Coalition is the lead organization in a broad network of groups participating in the June 30 National Day of Protest. The group, called Lumalabang Mamamayan sa Harap ng Krisis at Kahirapan (Lumaban Ka!), has planned this protest activity long before the *jueteng* and "Gloriagate tape" scandals broke out. It is aimed at highlighting the people's demands on various issues plaguing the country, such as the continued prioritization of debt payments over the provision of social and economic services, power and water rates increases, additional taxes, rising prices of basic commodities, toll fees, tuition fees, etc.

We firmly assert that these posters are not illegal, whether in terms of content or intent. We condemn the Quezon City fiscal's office which upgraded the charges against the students—from violating the anti-littering law to inciting to sedition (which was not part of the police recommendation). We also condemn the National Bureau of Investigation for the raid on the printing press producing the posters. Clearly, these are cases of citizens being harassed for airing legitimate concerns or of establishments being scared for printing materials of legitimate dissent.

We demand the return of all confiscated materials and equipment. We will also file countercharges against the Quezon City fiscal's office and the NBI for their actions.

—ANA MARIA NEMENZO,
president,
Freedom from Debt Coalition,
ananemenzo@yahoo.com

The meaning of silence

THE CLAMOR for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign following the *jueteng* and "Gloriagate" exposés will continue to hound her presidency. Many are calling for the President to break her silence and answer the accusations against her, but she insists on keeping mum about it. By doing so, she risks losing her credibility before the Filipino nation that is hungry for answers and the truth.

The tape may be inadmissible as evidence in any court of justice, but she forgets that the issue is already before the court of popular opinion. There is a legal maxim which goes—"Qui tacit consentere videtur," meaning, "Silence gives consent."

In Grefaldeo v. Lacson, the Supreme Court held in this wise: "The natural instinct of man impels him to resist an unfounded claim or imputation and defend himself. It is totally against our human nature to just remain reticent and say nothing in the face of false accusations. Hence, silence in such cases is almost always construed as implied admission of the truth thereof."

—FERDINAND ROAQUIN,
bong_r@yahoo.com

A call for the truth

THE FACULTY, professionals and staff of the Ateneo de Manila University join the call for the truth regarding the audiotaped conversations. We are aware that wire-tapping is illegal and the public release of the tapes may be part of a calculated plot to discredit the government and destabilize the country. But the substance of the tapes, which seems to point to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's involvement in the manipulation of the outcome of the 2004 elections, is such a grave and disturbing matter that cannot be ignored. This implication of electoral fraud provokes public outrage because it strikes at the very moral legitimacy of a President who after all first came to power with the support of a civil society disgusted with widespread corruption, blatant abuse of power and utter disregard for the common good.

President Arroyo's continued silence on the matter serves only to fuel further speculation and uncertainty. Her refusal to respond to the most basic question of what is true or not about the tapes only lends credibility to the charges of fraud, further undermines her authority, and creates precisely the kind of unstable climate conducive to malicious conspiracies. Her inability to address this issue squarely cannot but lead ultimately to a failure of governance. If Ms Arroyo, the government and the country's institutions are to withstand naked attempts at destabilization and seizure of power, she must act with responsibility and graciousness to address the accusations definitively.

We also support the call for an independent commission, composed of Filipinos of proven independence and integrity, to investigate and determine the authenticity of the tapes.

We also stand firm against all attempts at resolving this crisis through unconstitutional and undemocratic means. Such a path toward addressing our present problems will only lead to greater instability and foster more hardship on our already suffering people.

Finally, we call on our people to remain vigilant against attempts by civilian and/or military factions to sow confusion and disorder. We have already been witness in the recent past to shameless attempts at using legitimate popular grievances for narrow ends.

The present crisis is a manifestation of the need for fundamental and far-reaching political and socio-economic reform in our society.

—DR. MA. CELESTE GONZALEZ, chair,
Department of Education and School Forum, DR. BENJAMIN TOLOSA JR., chair,
Department of Political Science, DR. AGUSTIN MARTIN RODRIGUEZ, associate professor, Department of Philosophy,
LELAND JOSEPH DE LA CRUZ, director,
Development Studies Program,
and 309 SIGNATORIES,
Ateneo de Manila University

InqBox

Do you think that President Gloria Arroyo still has the credibility to lead our nation? Why or why not?

PRES. ARROYO HAS LOST d MORAL ASCENDANCY 2 GOVERN. POWER CORRUPTS, and it CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY.
—Vicente R. Ragas, 46, *CAVITE*

Ders nothing left to her.. To gain back her CREDIBILITY?! She shud step down.. For God's sake.. Ü
—teejay belen, 20, *Calauan, Laguna*

To OBLIVION? maybe.. 2 d LAND OF PROMISE? i dont think so.. She cudn't even lead her gang of thieves, how much more our nation??!
—gv cunada, 24, *iloilo city*

YES she still has the credibility to lead. Look what she is doing right now & even before, she is focused on working to hasten economic recovery, programs for our country.
—chris estallo, 31, *Pque*

no, there is dignity in silence but issues lyk dis need a strait answer if u have nothing 2 hide or protect, Transparency in governance is lacking.
—darius, 27, *bulacan*

yes, lead the nation become gambling capital & call center of the world!
—Bernard Dujali, *Panabo City*

PGMA LOST her CREDIBILITY already, iF SHE HAS DONE NOTHNG wrong, why S2RIS KEPT ON BLOWING OUT, GOD iS GRACIOUS she may ask forgiveness
—NNETH, 27, *ZAMBOANGA CITY*

Credibility? How can she lose 1thing she never had? Der in lies our problem, if credibility is a mark of leadership, den we have been leaderless for yrs.
—ramon g. lukban, 48, *q.c.*

Yes, credible to lead. She's not yet proven guilty, with the technology today nothing is impossible, let's give her the benefit of the doubt.
—Lesette Iglesia, 28, *Albay*

The GMA regime is nothing but a prime example of the theory of retribution, and the law of karma.
—Ariel Deriada, 29, *Cadiz City*

yes, bCoz d "heLLo Garci" scAndal has nOt yet been legally- aC-claimed as AuThentic, n d Pres is dOing her best 2 save d cOuntry..
—Alma Gilbretta Bolinas, 17, *Jagna*

YES, still credible because of 3 facts: 1)God appointed her; 2)She won the election; 3)Majority of the Pilipino people love her..
—Alfredo Millares, 57, *Makati*

With all diz scandals, her CREDIBILITY is now questionable.

Speak d truth!

Worst, sumasabay din sa pagbagsak ang economy natin.
—Alexander A. Lebantino, 27, *Pampanga*

Yes! In spite of.. I stil wud prefer GMA than d others who hav ZERO credibility.
—Julie Luy, *zambo city*

arroyo government doesn't have d credibility 2 lead. Hers is full of lies and hunger 4 power. I regret voting 4 her.
—celyn, 33, *davao city*

She is innocent Until provn guilty. GMA shud govern as she had swore 2 govern. We r not under the Sharia law.
—rene locsin, *QC*

She still has credibility to lead, because her guilt has not yet been proven beyond reasonable doubt
—gustavo adaza, 33, *cagayan de oro*

I strongly believe that Pres. GMA did not cheat in the elections. As president, she is not perfect..
—Juan Deveraturda, *Subic, Zambales*

Not anymore..bcoz with all d news & scandals today against her, it means dat d people are already against her.
—Hubert Hernandez, 28, *zamboanga city*

NO. she lied not 2 run, jueteng thrived despite Edsa 2, if tape true, she has no mandate, & her neck already held by co-conspirators..
—judith ambas, 33, *biñan*

NO more credibility, coz of the issues about HER FAMILY & HER, I THINK NO one will honor her.
—Jasmin SAINGAN, 26, *TUBA, benguet*

What do you think should President Gloria Arroyo do in the wake of the jueteng and audio tape recording scandals?

She shud exert all efforts 2 prove she &her family are not involved in these scandals. her continued silence will not disprove their involvement.
—J. Urquico, *Bislig City*

Ignore d scandals, fulfill her responsibilities, and forgive and pray 4 d people who r trying to pull her down
—Corazon Bautista, 16, *Las Piñas City*

PGMA shud STOP POLITICAL VOODO!!! SHE SHUD Let the Filipnos hear the taped conversation between her and Garcillano.
—Flobin F. Garbin, 19, *Sorsogon*

People around GMA know what to do. Let us allow her 2 face More IMPORTANT ISSUES: PEACE and ORDER, and d ECONOMY.
—JOHN ANDRI CUNANAN, 16, *Gen. SANTOS city*

sa scandals deadma lang cia, sa ekonomiya work harder pa. Oposisyon walang kwenta..
—godofredo garbin, *gma cavite*

d president shud stand 2 resolve d issues by telling d truth and 2 wOrk 4 d best interest of d nati0n..
—luke eduard ensong, *bayawan city*

D president shd do wat she is doing now, keep working! After all she is not directly involved in d so called jueteng scandal..
—Lorna Gonzalez, 49, *Cebu City*

we should not be judgmental to her just because of the issues coming out. what she should do is to get out and explain.
—geran adolfo, 24, *cebu city*

Sacrifice her husband, admit Garci was responsible creating 1M votes for her, and dream of getting taller.
—Pepe Esteban, 75, *Olongapo*

she should focus on her 10-point agenda to make the Philippines a country we can be proud of to the rest of the world
—A.V. Padios, 49, *cabuyao, laguna*

PGMA shud b true 2 herself and d Pinoys by telling d truth so we can all move on.
—Sylvia Reyes, 45, *Cavite*

Being d president, GMA is d face of d country. She is d face of a corrupt and squalid leader.. In d wake of d jueteng and audio tape recording scandals, d Pres. shud heed d best option: dat is 2 RESIGN.
—alexis rey l. uy, 25, *quezon city*

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NPAs raid N. Cotabato cop station, seize guns

KIDAPAWAN CITY—Communist rebels disguised as soldiers took off with 29 high-powered firearms during a late afternoon raid on the Magpet police station on Sunday.

Magpet Mayor Efren Piñol said about 30 New People's Army (NPA) rebels arrived at the police station in three L-300 vans past 5 p.m.

Piñol said the rebels told policemen manning the station that they were turning over a prisoner.

Initially, about five of them alighted from one of the vans and presented a handcuffed man.

As soon as they were inside the police station, the rebels, some of them in Army uniforms, drew their guns and ordered the policemen to hand over their firearms.

The other rebels entered the station and joined their comrades in disarming the surprised policemen, while others posted themselves as guards.

"The police officers were not able to fight back. They were caught off-guard," he said.

After divesting the policemen of their firearms—including two M-14 rifles, seven M-16 Armalite rifles, seven .45 cal. pistols, six .38 cal. revolvers, six Garand rifles and two 9 mm pistols—the rebels locked them in a cell and escaped.

The raid came as Director General Arturo Lomibao, PNP chief, said police fear communist rebels exploiting the crisis confronting the Arroyo administration now than rightists forming a junta.

But he also said he sees no imminent threat of a communist victory.

"They (communist rebels) might take advantage of the situation, and as you very well know, the entry of the armed elements of the Left will not be very good for the situation," he said.

The raid also seems to belie a report made by the military intelligence that the strength of communist guerrillas has weakened.

NORTH COTABATO
Magpet
Kidapawan
Area enlarged

Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, AFP public information chief, said the number of rebels as of May was only 7,709 from 8,240 in December.

Supt. Miguel Laurel, North Cotabato police director, said the rebels later abducted Silverio Bafilar, a village official of Barangay Magkaalam.

Laurel said the rebels forced Bafilar to guide them out of Magpet. He was later released.

Gov. Emmanuel Piñol said soldiers and policemen recovered the three vehicles used by the armed men in Barangay Magkaalam.

He said the drivers of the vans, identified as Virgilio Ignacio and Arnel Quezada, of Barangay Osias in Kabacan town, and Miguel Butigan of Kidapawan City, were also found in the village.

Piñol said based on the account of drivers, an unidentified woman hired them, supposedly for a family affair in Digos City.

Piñol said the rebels were led by a Commander Eloy of the NPA's Front Committee 51.

"This goes to show that we are not supposed to keep our guards down. The police and the military are supposed to be always on the alert," Piñol said. *Jeffrey Tupas with reports from Edwin Fernandez and Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Luigi del Puerto and Dona Pazzibugan in Manila*

TARONGOY embraces sister Janice upon arrival at the Davao International Airport June 26. BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Tarongoy driven to tears as he comes home to Davao

DAVAO CITY—Robert Teodore Tarongoy was overwhelmed by his return here when he arrived on board a Philippine Airlines flight from Manila around 8:57 p.m. on Sunday.

Tears freely flowed down his cheeks when his younger sisters, Elizabeth, 25, and Janice, 20, met him at the VIP Lounge of the Davao International Airport.

Robert enplaned from Manila with his wife Ivy Grace, parents Tomas and Isabelita, brother Eugene and mother-in-law Linda.

His other relatives and friends, who patiently waited for nearly six hours, gave him a warm reception.

After exchanging pleasantries with them, with Elizabeth handing him his favorite brand of corn chips and candies, the 31-year-old former Iraqi captive and members of his immediate family boarded a waiting vehicle, which took them to the Seagull Beach Resort in Punta Dumalag in this city.

Robert did not say a word to journalists who were hoping to get a brief statement from him.

But his father Tomas said his son would face the media after spending some more days with the family.

Recalling what his son had narrated to him earlier, Tomas said Robert had a miserable experience in the hands of his captors.

Tomas said during the 233 days that Robert spent in captivity, his son had experienced torture and lack of food and water, among other hardships.

Tomas said it was a miracle that Robert survived the ordeal.

"Imagine, he only had rotten fruits to eat once a day while suffering abuses from the hands of his captors. It's a miracle he remains alive," he said in the vernacular.

Tomas said Robert told him that prayers boosted his hopes for freedom.

Robert was working as an accountant for an Arab firm when he was snatched on Nov. 1, along with several foreign workers, including an American.

All the hostages, except for the American, had already been released. *Anthony Allada and Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

LP bets in ARMM seek revamp of Comelec staff

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The candidate of the administration Liberal Party and his running mate are demanding an overhaul of the Commission on Elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao to prevent fraud amid reports that ARMM election officers were involved in cheating in previous elections.

Liberal Party candidate Ibrahim Paglas III and his running mate Hatta Dimaporo wanted the Comelec to overhaul its offices in the region to maintain the credibility of the elections.

They said most Comelec personnel in the ARMM are relatives of politicians running in the fifth regional elections.

Paglas said it would be better if the Comelec fielded personnel from other regions because they could not be easily intimidated or bought.

He said if the poll body would retain the present composition of Comelec offices in the region, the elections would never be credible, particularly in the wake of allegations of vote rigging in recent years.

"We were told that in the Lanao provinces, you can buy votes from P500 to P15,000. Elections have become a business activity (in the ARMM)," Paglas claimed.

Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar earlier told the INQUIRER that Comelec personnel in the region could be easily bought.

"If politicians buy, the Comelec sells," Akbar said.

Helen Aguila Flores, former ARMM Comelec director, said replacing personnel is "not a guarantee for clean and honest elections."

"Why involve religion in manning the elections. For me, it doesn't sound good," Flores, now director of the Comelec's Western Mindanao office, said.

As this developed, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) said it was withdrawing from the elections because of Malacañang's support for some politicians.

Muslimin Sema, MNLF secretary general, said MNLF field commanders have agreed to boycott the elections "if only to manifest constructive sense of direction in sustaining peace."

"We assert that the adopted modalities for the forthcoming elections have been done unilaterally by the government," he said.

With or without the participation of the MNLF, the Comelec said the elections would push through as scheduled. *Julie Alipala and Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Tragedy hounds Myrna Diones as brother kills husband

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BINALONAN, Pangasinan—Tragedy continues to hound Myrna Diones, the woman who survived attempts to kill her in 1991 when she was 14 years old. Her husband, Cipriano Fronda, was stabbed dead by her brother on Wednesday.

Myrna said when her husband arrived from work, her younger brother Angelo stabbed him once in the chest and once in the stomach.

"He was very drunk," she said of her brother. She said Angelo had been "resentful" of her husband for a long time. "I think he envied my husband because he had a job and he doesn't have one. I really do not know," Diones told the INQUIRER.

She immediately took Fronda to the Sacred Heart Hospital in Urdaneta City where he died a few hours after an operation.

Fronda left behind Myrna and three children.

Myrna has a bigger problem: She cannot bury her husband because the hospital would not release his death certificate unless she paid P117,000.

"Please help me. I do not know what to do anymore," she said.

The INQUIRER sought the help of Urdaneta Mayor Amadeo Perez Jr. who called up the hospital administration. Perez said half of the bill was for the professional fees of surgeons while the other half was for medicine and laboratory expenses.

He promised to help Myrna get a discount.

CSC exec seriously wounded in ambush

COTABATO CITY—The provincial director of the Civil Service Commission in Maguindanao was seriously injured in an ambush in nearby Sultan Kudarat town yesterday morning, police authorities said.

SPO1 Mokamad Mama, Sultan Kudarat police investigator, said lawyer Arnold Joluya, 31, was on his way to the CSC office when an unidentified gunman fired at his car at about 8 a.m. in Barangay Macaguiling.

Joluya was driving the car and was with several companions when attacked.

But Mama said the suspect was only after Joluya because his companions were not harmed. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

In view of the current economic situation, the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) wishes to announce that it is supporting the appeal of the Department of Trade and Industry for a moratorium on price adjustments. PHAP will exert best efforts to maintain prices of essential medicines for as long as possible.

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Belgium to stop sending direct aid to RP

PAGADIAN CITY—Belgium would soon end its direct aid to the Philippines, preferring instead to channel development assistance through non-government organizations and multilateral agencies.

Belgian ambassador to the Philippines Christian Tanghe said his country would provide direct aid only until August 2007, when the term of the Belgian Integrated Agrarian Reform Support Program (BIARSP) ends.

BIARSP is one of the largest direct aid package in the Belgian government's development assistance portfolio to the Philippines.

Started in 1997, with the Department of Land Reform (DLR) as lead implementing agency, BIARSP cost the Belgian government about P900 million.

It seeks to make agrarian reform work by going beyond the "land-to-the-tiller" concept and providing new landowners with support services for agricultural productivity as well as social services for their communities like basic education, potable water, sanitation and primary health care.

Tanghe, during the sidelines of his two-day visit late last week in projects in the Zamboanga Peninsula that are supported by Belgian aid, said despite the scheduled end in direct aid, the Philippines would remain "an important recipient" of Belgian development assistance.

After 2007, aid funds would flow through non-government organizations, multilateral agencies such as the European Union development organizations and the United Nations Development Program, he said.

Apart from BIARSP, Belgium is also actively involved in a United Nations-initiated multilateral development program, which aims to secure the economic foundations for peace in Central Mindanao after the national government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) signed a peace deal in 1996. *Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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MESSAGES

Now that Filipino nurses and professional caregivers are in great demand abroad, I hope that the skills and training you acquired will also reach our countrymen wherever you may be. I hope that you would be advocates and true exemplars of professionalism, hospitality and service, to be truly WOW – workers of worth.

May you continue to inspire other Filipinos to rise and take up the challenge to lead our country to progress and development. Mabuhay kayong lahat!

HON. RICHARD GORDON
Senator

I wish to convey my heartfelt congratulations to the officials, faculty and staff, and most especially to the graduates of St. Augustine School of Nursing and AMA School of Medicine (East Rizal) on the occasion of their joint graduation ceremonies.

Your graduation theme, "Conquering the Global Market in the Field of Total Health Care", affirms your work readiness for the world job market. This is an indication of the quality of education and training provided by your school in bringing Filipino health workers to the world.

SEC. AUGUSTO BOBOY SYJUCO
Director General, TESDA

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ROUNDUP

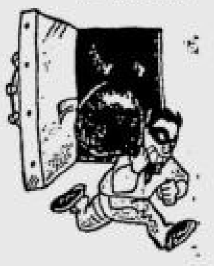
Palay festival

ROXAS, Isabela—This town will hold the Pagay Festival (palay festival) on July 2-4 to celebrate its agricultural bounty. The festival, which will coincide with Roxas' 57th founding anniversary, would highlight the important role of the town as one of the largest rice producers in Isabela. In a statement, Mayor Benedict Calderon said the festival is both a thanksgiving for and a celebration of the town's bountiful rice harvest this year. Calderon said the two-day affair would feature the "Bihisan ng Kuliglig" (a parade of dressed-up hand tractors), "Macho Nuang" (search for the most good looking carabao), a street dancing competition, and an agricultural fair, among other activities. *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Prosecutor shot dead

MEYCAUAYAN, Bulacan—A Bulacan prosecutor was shot and killed in front of a bar in Barangay Sto. Niño here on Saturday. Police said prosecutor Julio Taloma, 45, a resident of Marilao town, was preparing to go home at 2 a.m. after a night out with his friends at the Trooper's Restobar when a man armed with a .45 cal. pistol approached his car and shot him. Supt. Fernando Villanueva, Meycauayan police chief, said Taloma died instantly due to bullet wounds in the neck and body. Villanueva said the police have yet to establish the motive of the killing but believed it was work-related. He said Taloma was handling the prosecution of illegal drugs-related cases under a special court for drug offenses at the Bulacan regional trial court (RTC) in Malolos City. Villanueva said Taloma was a regular customer at the bar but employees there said the prosecutor had no known enemies among their patrons. Lawyer Jose de la Rama Jr., president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) chapter in Bulacan, condemned Taloma's murder. He said Taloma, who had served for more than four years as prosecutor, was a dedicated member of the legal profession. Taloma, according to De la Rama, started his career as a lawyer for the Public Attorney's Office (PAO) in Bulacan. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Rural bank robbed



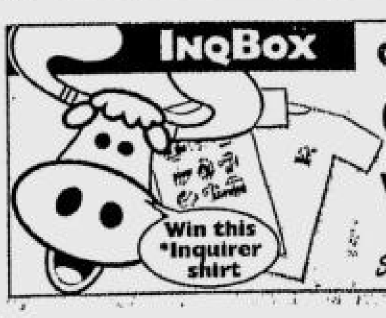
KALAYAAN, Laguna—Police are still investigating the robbery at the Magdalena Rural Bank-Kalayaan, Laguna Branch by unidentified men who took more than P300,000 in cash. Police said bank guard Dominador Villanueva reported to the police office here that at about midnight on June 21, the suspects forcibly entered the back door of the bank in Barangay Longos, Kalayaan by destroying its padlock. The suspects were able to open the vault by cutting the lock using acetylene torch. The suspects also got the .38-cal. service pistol of the security guard. Police said the bank's alarm device connected to the police station did not function because it was pulled out from its socket.
Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Man kills son

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—A barangay chair in this town accidentally shot his own son on Sunday last week. A police report identified the victim as Gary Garibay, 33, married, of Barangay Sto. Angel Norte, Sta. Cruz town. The suspect was his father Alfredo, 69, Barangay Sto. Angel Norte chair. SPO1 Valentino Reveche said the suspect shot his son with a .38-cal. revolver over a misunderstanding. The victim suffered a gunshot wound and was rushed to the nearby Laguna Provincial Hospital and later transferred to the Holy Family Hospital where he was later declared dead.
Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Philhealth cards for poor

LUCENA CITY—More than 1,000 indigent residents received their Philhealth ID cards during the Philhealth Para sa Masa Program held at the Punzalan Gym on Thursday. Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. launched the program in coordination with the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO). Talaga said the Philhealth ID would supplement the city government health program for the depressed sector of the community. Lourdes Ruanto, CSWDO chief, told the card recipients that not all expenses for medicines will be refunded. She said only those medicines that are included in the list will be subject to refund.
Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



INQBOX Question of the Week

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Ex-Masbate solon shot dead in Caloocan

By Nancy C. Carvajal, Michael L. Ubac and Luige A. del Puerto

A FORMER Masbate congressman who survived an assassination attempt last year was shot by unidentified killers in front of his neighbors in Caloocan City late Sunday evening.

Police said Fausto Seachon Jr., 64, a congressman for three terms, was playing mahjong in a billiard shop near his house at Road 11 GSIS Hills Talipapa, Barangay 164, when a man approached his table and fired at him at close range.

"He was hit in the chest, but was able to run away from his attackers," said Caloocan police chief Supt. Leo Garra.

Also hit during the incident were Alex Legazpi, 56, Seachon's driver, and Emma Alonzo, 55, who was seated near the victim.

The victim was the brother of Masbate Rep. Rizalina Seachon who defeated Olga Kho, wife of incumbent Masbate Gov. Antonio Kho in the 2004 elections. Rizalina also survived an ambush a month before the elections, but lost three of her supporters in the attack.

After his term expired, Seachon ran for governor but lost to Antonio. A few days before the elections last year, Seachon survived an ambush, but a candidate for councilor was killed and four others were wounded.

"An artist's sketch is now being prepared, based on descriptions provided by witnesses," Garra said. A task force from the local police force and members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) based in Camp Crame has been assigned to investigate the case.

"I have directed the Northern Police District to create Task Force Seachon to pursue this investigation," said National Capital Region Police Office chief Director Vidal Querol.

Hired killers

Garra said they are looking at the possible angle of politics as the motive for the attack, following a talk with the victim's family.

"They pointed to their political rivals in the province as behind the killing," he added.

Garra also said that based on their initial investigation, the killing was conducted by professional assassins.

"It looks like the job of hired killers," he said.

Seachon sustained multiple gunshot wounds and was rushed to a nearby hospital, but died while being treated at the Casaul General Hospital in Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

RELATIVES of slain former Masbate Rep. Fausto Seachon Jr. think politics could be a motive for the killing. His body is now at Funeraria Nacional in Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

"He was kind to us. We feel bad that we were not able to help him because we were afraid we could be killed," said one of his neighbors.

"Every time he was around, he would feed all of us. He would share whatever he had with us," said Hector Peralta, who said he only found out about the incident when his sister Mayang Angeles woke him up to ask for help in bringing the former congressman to the hospital.

Angeles, who said she was seated at a table beside the victim when he was shot, said she had knocked on several doors for help, but nobody bothered to assist them.

She said the former congressman held on to her as they proceeded to walk toward a small street where they stayed for some time before asking help from neighbors. "But nobody opened their doors," she added.

Querol said investigators were initially eyeing politics as the most likely motive for the killing.

"We don't have a specific motive as yet, but the NPD is looking at this angle. But, of course, we are not limited to this angle in the investigation of the case," he said.

A staff member at the office of Rep. Rizalina Seachon said that political families who felt threatened by the rise of the Seachons in the province were behind the murder.

"There is no other motive," said Jacky Bacolod, a member of Rizalina's legislative staff, speaking on behalf of Rizalina, who is set to arrive today from Masbate.

Unsolved

Fausto, who lost to Kho with a slim margin of 1,660 votes, had wanted to run again for provincial governor in the 2007 election, she added.

Seachon's killing is the fourth in a string of unsolved political murders in the province in the last two decades. The victims were Rep. Moises Espinosa (2nd district), Gov. Jolly Fernandez, Rep. Tito Espinosa (2nd district) and Masbate City Mayor Jun Espinosa.

Seachon was also the second former congressman gunned down in Metro Manila this year. Former Pasig City Rep. Henry Lanot was shot dead while having lunch in Pasig City only last April.

Roces drainage unable to prevent floods

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IT TOOK almost one and a half years to finish repairs of flood-prone Chino Roces Avenue in Makati City.

But the former Pasong Tamo, with repaved sidewalks, better-lit lanes and a new drainage network, still gets flooded during a heavy downpour.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA), which undertook the repairs with the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), sees this as a phenomenon beyond its control.

"I think there was no defect in the design because we considered all factors when we undertook the project. Of course, only the drainage on Pasong Tamo was replaced, but the old drainage network around it is the same," said Reynaldo Estipona, project engineer of the Pasong Tamo improvement project.

The MMDA and the DPWH jointly implemented the project under the Metro Manila Urban Transport Integration Project that covered the stretch from Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road) to J.P. Rizal Street.

When heavy rains fell on Metro Manila late Friday and Saturday afternoon, the stretch from J.P. Rizal Street to Mascardo Street, Dela Rosa to Fernando Street, and the low-lying intersection of Arnaiz and Chino Roces Avenues were again flooded.

Estipona said old and heavily-silted drainage in side streets and the higher Amorsolo Creek "emptied" onto Chino Roces Avenue.

Flood control monitoring showed that flooding on Roces was minimal since the rehabilitation, Estipona said. The best solution would be regular unclogging of lateral drainage, he added.

Case filed against unidentified bar slay suspect

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE MAKATI Police Department Criminal Investigation Division (MPD-CID) has filed charges of homicide, attempted homicide, and direct assault upon a person of authority against the alleged gunman in a shooting incident outside a Makati City bar a few weeks ago that resulted in the death of a television director.

One hitch, though. The MPD-CID has yet to fully identify the suspect.

Late Friday afternoon, the MPD-CID filed in the Makati City Prosecutor's Office a criminal complaint against a suspect known to them by three names: Oliver Perez, Oliver Angeles, and Oliver Castro.

The names were provided by people who witnessed the gunman go on a shooting rampage outside V-Bar in Ayala Center, Makati, around 4:10 a.m. on June 8.

Louis Santiago died in the shooting following a brawl among bar guests. Five others were injured as the gunman randomly fired his handgun. Also injured was responding policeman Senior Insp. Merquiodi Bodanio.

In the charge sheet was the suspect's address: 34 Cambridge Street, Hillsborough Subdivision, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

The address belongs to the family of Charito Angeles, identified as the owner of the mocha-colored Toyota Hi-Lux used by the gunman in leaving the crime scene, according to witnesses.

The complainants were Santiago's father, Rogelio; Althea Arvisu, among those injured; Bodanio, and another policeman, Adrian Tibor.

New bicycle lane opens in Marikina

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

FIND the price of oil too high? Get a bicycle, especially if you live in Marikina City.

The city inaugurates today a new 377-meter bicycle lane in Barangay Sto. Niño, connecting Sumulong Highway and the Katipunan Access Road near Cainta, Rizal.

The P3-million project funded by the World Bank has brought the entire length of bike lanes in Marikina City to 29.77 kilometers, the city public information office said.

The almost 30-km bicycle lane links markets, workplaces and residential areas.

The new bike lane that ends in the Katipunan Access Road is connected to the existing bike lane running from Barangay Concepcion Dos, passing through Parang Area and ending in Barangay Fortune, where many factories are located.

The city government hopes to add 16 km more to the bike lane this year.

The project is part of the Marikina City Bikeways Program which aims to build a 66-km bike lane to promote the use of bikes as a means of transportation.

The city government, which earlier handed over 150 mountain bikes for barangay watchmen through its Bantay Bayan program, will also hand over bikes to Barangay Sto. Niño this afternoon.

Bikes will not only save motorists money, but will also keep them physically fit and lessen air pollution.

The city encourages its residents to use bicycles.

Apart from conducting a training, the city also has a bicycle loan project. Employees and students can get a loan payable in one year to buy bikes.

The bikeways program was started by former city mayor and now Metropolitan Manila Development Authority chair Bayani Fernando.

This afternoon's ceremonies will be attended by Fernando, local officials and representatives of the World Bank.

Hurray! BIR has not spared Iggy Arroyo

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

I DOFF my hat—even bow my head—to Commissioner Guillermo Parayno of the Bureau of Internal Revenue for not sparing even Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, the President's brother-in-law.

The BIR said that from 1998, Iggy Arroyo paid a measly P15,000 in taxes annually.

So, what happened to the P250-million "Jose Pidal" account which First Gentleman Mike Arroyo's brother said was his?

Iggy Arroyo claimed that he placed the money in a bank.

In that case, it would either have been on a time deposit mode or money market placement with an annual interest rate of 7.5 percent.

So, the presidential brother-in-law's earnings in interest yearly from the P250-million Jose Pidal account is P18.75 million.

With the P18.75-million interest yearly from the Jose Pidal account, Iggy Arroyo should be paying the BIR P5.625 million in taxes a year!

Goodness gracious!

Since the time he acquired the P250 million (1998) up to the present, he evaded paying a total of P33.75 million in taxes!

And the guy has only been paying P15,000 in taxes yearly since 1998?

Ang garapal naman !

* * *

President GMA should be commended for adopting a hands-off attitude toward the BIR's plan to charge Iggy Arroyo with tax evasion.

It shows her sincerity in eliminating graft and corruption in government.

In fact, she has hired the services of a former antigraft czar in Hong Kong whose government was once graft-ridden.

If Iggy Arroyo gets convicted of tax evasion, the GMA administration might get back the citizenry's trust.

* * *

Speaking of graft and corruption, delaying the release of money intended for an individual or entity by a government agency for no reason at all constitutes graft.

Wenceslao Maragrag, a driver, lost his jeepney at the MMDA impounding area five years ago.

He has been going to the office of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando to claim a check in his name.

The Ombudsman ordered the MMDA to pay Maragrag P220,000 for the loss of his jeepney in the care of the MMDA.

A check for P220,000 had been on Fernando's desk since March 16.

The check was already signed and ready for release to Maragrag.

But Rolando Josep, BF's secretary, doesn't want the check released for reasons only he knows.

Maragrag had been going to BF's office countless times to claim the check.

Each time he does so, Josep sends for a policeman to investigate the poor driver, despite an order from the Ombudsman to the MMDA for payment.

Mr. Josep, *baka gusto mong makihati, ha? Masama yan!*

'Pupil' charged in mentor's death

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

SHE WAS her elementary school teacher and close friend.

But Marie Claire Ruiz, 37, is now facing homicide charges following the death of catechist Paulita Bonifacio, 50, allegedly after a night of deep prayer inside a room in Mandaluyong City two weeks ago.

Until now, investigators had not spoken to or gotten any statements from Ruiz, PO3 Robert Eugenio said.

The suspect's family also refused to give a statement, saying they would consult their lawyer first, the investigator added.

What really happened inside the room where Bonifacio died remained a mystery to the police.

Bonifacio's body was discovered in the early morning of June 13 inside a room she was renting. Ruiz, who was in the room, was in a state of shock. Both women were naked when found.

Bonifacio had head injuries while Ruiz had scratches on her arms and legs.

The night before, neighbors heard the two praying loudly. The loud chants continued until the following morning. Then only one woman's voice was heard.

Ruiz's uncle, Ding, said his niece looked "possessed" when brought to the hospital.

Farmers cry foul over demolition of shanties outside DLR

By Blanche S. Rivera

FARMERS belonging to the Pambansang Ugnayan ng Nagsasariling Lokal na Organisasyon sa Kanayunan (Unorka) yesterday accused men from the Quezon City Department of Public Order and Safety of violating their rights after their shanties were demolished outside the Department of Land Reform yesterday.

Insisting on their right to peaceful assembly, the group said building temporary shelter was legal even if it was less than five meters from a national highway.

Eric Cabanit, Unorka secretary general, said their members from the provinces needed a place to stay while following up their cases with the DLR.

Unorka used their banners, discarded lumber and boxes, sacks and tarpaulins to build their makeshift houses.

At least 20 farmers had been staying there since April to follow up cases related to the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. Many of them came from the provinces of Davao, Negros, Laguna, Mindoro, Cavite and Bulacan.

"We sleep there, even if the roofs leak on rainy days. No farmer likes staying there because we can't even use the DLR's toilets and it's hard to get water for cooking. But we have nowhere else to go," Cabanit told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Unorka said it would file a complaint against the QC-DPOS and DLR officials, led by Sec. Rene Villa, before the Commission on Human Rights.

Cabanit said the DLR had banned them from entering the premises a few weeks ago, forcing them to seek refuge at the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) beside the DLR. But even the PCA had become hostile to them lately, he added.

"I don't see why they demolished our temporary homes. We're not selling anything there," Cabanit said.

Farmers think one reason could be the recent "siege" of the DLR central office. Last June 8, more than a hundred farmers entered the premises, breaking glass doors and taking over Villa's fourth-floor office after they failed to meet with the DLR official.

In a letter to Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte, Villa's executive assistant Rodelo Franco requested the demolition and the assignment of policemen to the DLR from June 10 to 15.

He said the shanties were being used as staging areas for illegal assemblies.

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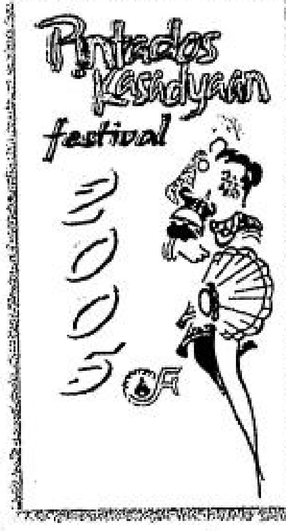
- Doble Cara Contest at the Plaza, 11PM
- Fireworks display at the Plaza, 12 midnight



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- Band Wars at the Balyuhan Park feat. 5 Seasons Band and Campo Santo Band, 9PM

June 28:

- Harvest Festival at the Children's Park, 9AM
- Subiran Regata at the Children's Park, 9AM
- Kayak Race at the Children's Park, 9AM
- Kitchie Nadal Concert at the Balyuhan Park with Poetic Spark Band from Manila, 9PM (surprises await Globe subscribers at the Globe tents!)

June 29:

- Pintados-Kasadyaan Festival 2005 starting from the Leyte Sports Development Complex, 9AM
- Ms. Leyte Kasadyaan Tourism 2005 at the Leyte Sports Development Complex, 7PM
- Concert with Level 8 Band from Cebu, EYE MEE and the Royal Scavengers Band at the Balyuhan Park, 9PM
- DMC Bounce Party at the Leyte Park Hotel, 9PM

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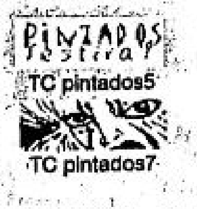

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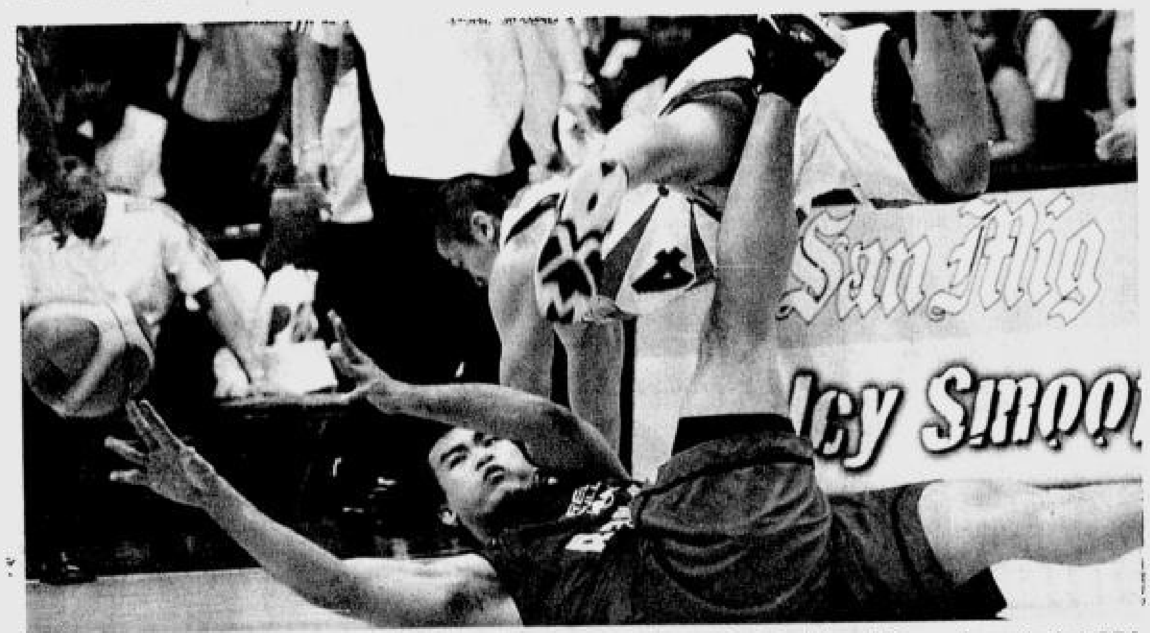

FUTILE EFFORT: Red Bull's Nelson Asaytono disputes ball possession against San Miguel's Denver Lopez in their PBA game Sunday night. The Beermen won to barge into the finals. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Cubs, Squires rout rivals

By Jasmine W. Payo

DESPITE their rookie-laden lineup, the San Beda Cubs cruised to a 79-65 victory over the Philippine Christian U Baby Dolphins in the NCAA season opener of the juniors division yesterday at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The Cubs leaned on sophomore forward Teree Guillermo, who drilled 14 of his 21 points in the deciding third-quarter run.

Still, longtime San Beda mentor Ato Badolato noted that it would take time before his nine rookies adjust to his system.

"There's a big difference from last year, it will be difficult for us," said Badolato, whose Cubs are gunning for a fourth straight title. "We don't have the height advantage anymore unlike last year. But we'll do everything and keep on fighting every game."

The Cubs are adjusting to the departure of 2004 Most Valuable Player Rogemar Menor, 2003 MVP Jay-R Taganas, Eduardo Tecson and James Martinez.

The Letran Squires also overwhelmed the University of Perpetual Help, 98-41, in the second game.

Darrell John Green, a Fil-Am rookie center, led the Squires with 25 points and 11 rebounds.

"We have a very strong chance this year," said coach Jing Ruiz of the Squires, who have settled for runner-up finishes in the last four seasons. "But San Beda will always be the team to beat. They have a winning tradition."

In the final match, the Jose Rizal Light Bombers trounced the CSB-La Salle Greenies, 72-65, with Donald Bejado and Leonard Azotea leading the balanced charge with 14 points apiece.

Asi stays in freezer

By June Navarro

ASI Taulava will remain in cold storage when the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals collide with the San Miguel Beermen in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference Finals which starts this Friday.

This came after the PBA Board of Governors sidestepped the Taulava issue in favor of other administrative concerns originally tabled for its regular meeting yesterday.

"It wasn't taken up because the issue wasn't raised by either Talk 'N Text or any other party for that matter," said PBA Commissioner Noli Eala after the board meeting held at the Shangri-La Edsa.

"So essentially, it will be status quo for Asi (Taulava). He's still not allowed to play and the league will continue to evaluate his case depending on the development on the legal side," he added.

Both the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration had upheld Taulava's right to play but Eala said the TNT center would only be reinstated once the DOJ retracts its earlier ruling that the 6-foot-9 Most Valuable Player of the 2003 PBA season faked his papers to gain Filipino citizenship.

Eala also announced the election of Ely Capacio of San Miguel in place of Buddy Encarnado of Sta. Lucia, who will step down at season's end.

Ricky Vargas of Talk 'N Text was chosen vice president while Red Bull team manager Tony Chua was elected treasurer.

Eala said the three media outfits—ABC-5, Solar Sports and IBC-13—bidding for the exclusive TV coverage of the games are expected to present their offer on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the referees, who worked the TNT-Shell game Sunday which the Phone Pals won in overtime to reach the finals, will not be around for the championship series.

Saying it was a poorly officiated match, Eala said suspension looms for Mario Montiel, Throngy Aldaba and Joey Calungcaguin, who were summoned by the PBA technical committee to explain their side yesterday.

"Of course, a suspension is in the offing. But I've been also thinking of reviewing their performance and forbidding them from officiating in the championship," said Eala.

Shell finished the game minus import Ajani Williams who was slapped his sixth foul in the dying minutes of overtime by Calungcaguin after a scramble for possession with TNT's Jerald Honeycutt.

"I believe it was the turning point of the game," said Eala. "It spoiled a really good game."

But he noted that credit should not be taken away from the Phone Pals, who, the commissioner stressed, won on their own merits despite the ghastly officiating.

Team manager Bobby Kanapi stormed into the media room after the Turbochargers' 96-91 overtime defeat to the Phone Pals, called the referees stupid and said they should be investigated.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

TENNIS: Wimbledon; Day 7 Highlights; 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Round of 16; 12 noon; Women's Quarterfinals; 7 p.m.; STAR Sports – The action heats up at the All-England Club

GOLF: US Open Golf, First Round; 5 p.m. (r); ESPN – Take another look at the first round from Pinehurst.

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Tough Vegas stint awaits RP cagers

THE PHILIPPINE basketball team steps up its buildup for the Fiba-Asia Championships in September by competing in a strong international tournament in Las Vegas next month.

Bannered by Philippine Basketball Association stars, the RP squad will participate in the 2005 Global Hoops Summit on July 16-21 where at least 12 teams from around the globe are expected to compete.

Coach Chot Reyes and the RP dribblers finally get a chance to play against Asian giants China and South Korea, Qatar and the Nigerian national squad, a perennial qualifier in the Olympics.

"I want to play China and Korea as much as we possibly can," said Reyes. "If we lose every time we play them, so be it. Our goal is to take away the awe when we compete against these teams," he added.

The RP dribblers are also excited over the prospect of playing against two National Basketball Association squads composed of rookies and veteran free agents.

The National Basketball Developmental League, the farm league of the NBA, is also fielding an all-star team made up of top NBA prospects.

The Las Vegas sojourn kicks off a series of overseas tournaments the RP five will play to achieve keen form for the Fiba-Asia Championship to be held in Doha, Qatar, where the top two countries get automatic slots to the World Championship in Saitama, Japan, next year.

After their US stint, the Nationals will go straight to the William Jones Cup on July 23-30 in Taiwan.

Another set of goodwill games back home is up next on Aug. 15-20 before the Nationals compete in a tournament in Bahrain where Asian teams China, Korea, Qatar, Lebanon and Japan will also see action.

"It's been planned and programmed. All we need is to implement and execute what was drawn up," said Reyes.

"It would really be a very busy schedule for us in the next few months and then, it's going to be war in September," the former Coca-Cola head coach added.

But before setting their sights on Doha, the RP dribblers should first reach the finals of the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championships set on Aug. 2-8 in Singapore. *June Navarro*

Disunity shakes PBFI

By Musong R. Castillo

THERE'S more than meets the eye in the postponed Philippine Basketball Federation's election of officers.

A highly placed source in the PBFI yesterday told the INQUIRER that more than the lack of resolutions authorizing the stakeholders to run for positions, the new group has yet to get a commitment from the Philippine Basketball Association.

A faction in the PBFI was also unhappy with early reports that Basketball Coaches Association of the Philippines president Chito Narvasa was a strong bet for the presidency.

The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the new cage body must be able to show complete unity to earn the nod of the world basketball federation (Fiba) and the recognition of the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Buddy Encarnado, chair of the PBA board, sits as interim chair of the PBFI; but this is being disputed by Lito Alvarez of Air 21, the franchise owner of FedEx in the pro league, who said Encarnado has not been endorsed by the PBA.

The PBA board has been divided on the issue, with two personalities lobbying for different positions on the matter. The issue was not tackled by the PBA board during its meeting yesterday.

Alvarez was recently elected deputy secretary general of the Basketball Association of the Philippines, the agency which the PBFI is aiming to replace in the POC.

The BAP was suspended two months ago for reneging on basic agreements forged in two basketball covenants with the POC.

The source also belied reports that three of the six stakeholders came to the elections with resolutions.

"There was no one there who could produce copies of their respective resolutions," the source said. "And this prompted Mr. (Robert) Aventajado (POC representative) to call off the elections indefinitely."

The NCAA, UAAP, BCAP, Small Basketeers, PBL and the PBA are the stakeholders.

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SPORTSWATCH

Bumgarner to compete, train in Italy

BUMGARNER

ASIAN Karting Queen Michele Bumgarner hopes to regain her winning form as she leaves for Italy to compete in the fourth round of the Italian Masters Series in Val Vibrata on July 1-3. The 15-year-old Bumgarner will be staying in Italy for the whole month of July to train. She will also be testing the new racing kart chassis design by the Intrepid Kart factory for the ICA class, which she may use to bolster her title bid in the final round of the Italian Masters Series scheduled July 28-31 in Ugento. Michele's younger brother Mark will be on hand to test-drive in Ugento after the final race in preparation for his plan to compete in next year's Italian Masters' racing series. On her return in August, Bumgarner, backed up by Accel, Samsung, Malaysia Airlines, Prive', Oakley and Bridgestone, will concentrate on the local karting races as well as the four remaining AKOC rounds to be held in Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Macau and the Asia-Pacific Championships in Suzuka Japan.

Go-For-Gold: Mandaluyong vs Air Force

IT WILL be Mandaluyong City against the Philippine Air Force when the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines brings the Touch Mobile Go-For-Gold to Siniloan, Laguna, on Tuesday. The best-of-seven bouts dual meet, to be hosted by Siniloan Mayor Gilmor Acero at the Plaza G. Redor at 6 p.m. marks the second dual meet of the program under the new format of a double elimination for the Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao areas. "Under the new format which started last June 23 in Lian, Batangas, where Sorsogon beat Aringgay, La Union (4-3) the top two teams after the eliminations in the three areas will go into another round of double eliminations with the top team emerging as the 2005 TM Go-for-Gold champion," said Abap president Manny T. Lopez. Sponsored by Touch Mobile, Accel, Ginebra San Miguel and Pacific Heights the Siniloan card will be spiced up by five special bouts featuring members of the RP Boxing team, including a women's fight between lightweights Mitchell Martinez of the Philippine National Police and Jhoren dela Rosa of Far Eastern University. The bouts is being aired on NBN 4 every Saturday from 7 to 8 p.m.

Xavier, Arellano cruise to badminton semis

XAVIER and Arellano beat their rivals in smashing fashions to advance to the semifinal round of the boys' high school team competitions of the 2005 JVC Open Badminton Championships which got underway with the qualifying rounds Sunday at PowerSmash. Xavier, led by singles player Jobett Co and the doubles tandem of Jeoffrey Arellado and Michael Lim, trounced Little Mary Heart Montessori, Rizal High School, Marcelo H. del Pilar and De la Salle-Zobel to sweep Group I and arrange a semis showdown with Group 2 second placer Ateneo. The Katipunan-based shuttlers, composed of Raphael Sanchez and doubles pair James Roman and Nicco Supangco, won three of four matches, including a 2-1 victory over La Salle-Antipolo, to finish second behind Group 2 topnotcher Arellano University. Like Xavier, Arellano, bannered by Andrei and JP Babad and Ian and Adrian Bautista, won all its four matches over La Salle-Antipolo, Sienna, Perpetual and Ateneo to set up a semis duel with Marcelo H. del Pilar on July 4, the start of the tournament proper of the annual event sponsored by JVC (Phils.) Inc.

Futsal, soccer at Ayala Westgrove Heights

NEW Long, Archers Nestle, Sphere 1 and Irok Sport emerged winners in their respective divisions in the two-day soccer tournament called "Mizuno Primera Liga" at the Ayala Westgrove Heights recently. New Long prevailed in women's futsal (indoor soccer) with Archers Nestle duplicating the feat in the men's division. Sphere 1 and Irok Sport topped the women's and men's soccer divisions, respectively. Los Baños and Irok Sport placed second and third, respectively, in both divisions of indoor soccer. Irok Sport was second in women's soccer with Los Baños ending up third this time while Manila Soccer Academy was No. 2 in men's soccer over Sta. Rosa Laguna A. Aside from trophies, the top teams receive Mizuno Futsal balls and Addict Mobile prepaid cards. The event was organized by Emmanuel Batumbacal as tournament director with support from Irok Sport. The sponsors are Mizuno, Smart Addict Mobile Prepaid and Powerbar.

Antonio is NCA Cocker of the Year

THE PRESTIGIOUS National Cockers Association (NCA) Cocker of the Year award was won by *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio last June 18 at the Araneta Coliseum during the championship round of the 2005 World Slasher Cup. Antonio's PEBR Complexor 3000 Mulawin IV piled up a whopping total of 79 points in 17 NCA derbies (15 national and two international derbies). Gov. Ito Ynares (Binangonan Balbina) and Pol Estrellado (PEBR Complexor 3000 Mulawin II) shared runner-up honors with 72 points each. "The proven Sagupaan training, conditioning and feeding method did it again," said Antonio. "Our Team Sagupaan always makes it a point to field only perfectly conditioned birds in every fight." It was Antonio's second NCA Cocker of the Year plum, having won the same award in 1998. That same year, Antonio posted the rare eight consecutive wins in the World Slasher Cup. Antonio is also credited as founder of the Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines.

Pasig One-Cock Ulutan lures big field

WELL-KNOWN partners Kags Paliza and Aba Badiola will host the "One-Cock Ulutan Fastest Win " on July 5 at the Pasig Square Garden. The derby is to draw more than 300 entries due to its entry fee of P2,200 and guaranteed prize of P530,000. The first 20 winners will get one 14" color TV each as bonus while the first 20 losers, one electric fan each. Likewise, the last 10 winners will get a 14" color TV. The top 10 major prizes are: fastest win champion, P115,000; second, P58,000 and third, P38,000; fourth to 10th, P10,000 and appliances. A record field of 576 entries were registered in the PSG One-Cock Ulutan last February, also hosted by Paliza and Badiola. PSG operator Gildo Capucchino said the event will start at 7 a.m. Registration will start as early as 5 a.m. For details, contact 646 -5858, 646-5828 and 0921-5191962.

POSSESS THE HEART OF THE CHAMPION
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OLYMPIC DAY RUN: Athletes and sports officials prepare to start the 2005 Olympic Day Run at the Baywalk Park on Roxas Boulevard yesterday. As part of the celebration of the event, a slogan contest was held. The Muay Thai Association of the Philippines topped the contest with its Medalyang Ginto, Alay sa Bayan slogan.

Mantawi cagers topple Crusaders

MANDAUE CITY—The Hapee/Dewfoam-backed Mantawi (Mandaue) Sparkling Nights shot a season-high 12 triples Sunday to whip the Iligan Crusaders, 88-75, in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the Cultural/Sports Center Here.

Ardy Larong led the Sparkling Nights, who are also supported by Mayor Thadeo "Teddy" Ouano, with his all-around play. He collected 24 points, including four triples, eight rebounds, five assists, three steals and two blocks.

Veteran playmaker Maui Huelar ably backed up Larong with 13 points, two boards, a season-high eight assists and two steals as the hosts dealt Mayor Lawrence Cruz's Crusaders their fourth loss in seven games.

The Sparkling Nights improved their record to 2-0 in the tourney supported by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Cebu Pacific, Spring Cooking Oil, Accel, Molten, Far Eastern Insurance, Nature's Spring, Skygo Motorcycles, Sirlitz Solutions Provider, Hapee Toothpaste, Dewfoam Corp., KSK Food Products (Boy Bawang), Ping Ping Lechon, Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

Mantawi seeks its third win tomorrow when it plays the Iloilo Warriors of IBL president Robert Uy and strong supporter Gov. Niel Tupas at 6 p.m. at the University of San Agustin gym in Iloilo.

The Sparkling Nights led by as many as 21 points in the first half, but the Crusaders rallied to within six, 71-77, with 2:45 left in the fourth.

Backup center Jeffrey France scored in the next play to give Mantawi breathing room, 79-71.

The ejection of Iligan coach Billy Reyes at the height of his team's rally proved disastrous to the Crusaders.

UST, La Salle forge 3rd title showdown

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FOR THE third straight conference, the spiking gals of La Salle and Santo Tomas will vie for the championship in the country's premier volleyball league.

The two powerhouse squads cemented yet another title showdown in the Shakey's V-League volleyball tournament by disposing of separate opponents yesterday at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

With power hitters Michelle Carolino and Manilla Santos leading the way, La Salle took the first championship slot by overwhelming Ateneo, 25-15, 29-27, 25-19.

University of Santo Tomas completed the date with a 25-13, 20-25, 27-25, 27-25 triumph over San Sebastian in the second game.

The Tigresses took the inaugural title while the Archers took the second conference championship. In both tournaments, they went up against each other.

The Tigresses weathered a late charge by San Sebastian to formalize its entry to the finals. Santo Tomas leaned on a strong first set bannered by Venus Bernal, Mary Jean Balse and Roxanne Pimentel who scored 17, 16 and 15 points, respectively, to get the headstart in the match.

UST thus posted its fourth win against five games in the semis, while SSC fell to its fifth loss in as many games.

The finals will be scheduled next week.

Carolino, a member of the national team, and Santos, La Salle's homegrown talent, took turns in slamming winners into the Lady Eagles' weakly-protected nest, scoring 18 and 16 points, respectively, for the Lady Archers' fourth victory in five semifinals games.

"We got a very inspired performance from the girls," said La Salle coach Ramil de Jesus. "We all realized that we have to make the finals in this game so we won't have a hard time in the last semis game against UST."

Another reinforcement, Concepcion Legaspi, decided to play despite a sprained left ankle and managed to score three points and boost the Lady Archers' morale. Maureen Penetrante added 12 points for La Salle.

MIKASA
MIKASA
RIANO
14
GUANCO
15
La Salle

DE LA Salle's Michelle Carolino spikes against Ateneo's Ma. Rosario Soriano and Amelia Guanco in their semifinal game won by the Lady Archers yesterday. RYAN LIM

Chamat stuns Reyes; Manalo prevails

SWEDEN'S Marcus Chamat bucked a bum stomach and a shaky start to trip Efren "Bata" Reyes, 9-7, in the opener of the 5th Motolite Battle of Champions Philippine International Open 9-Ball Championships main draw yesterday at the Robinson's Galleria Trade Hall.

A victim of mild food poisoning on Sunday, Chamat rallied from three racks down to score the first big upset in the double elimination tournament sponsored by Motolite, Café Puro and Emperador Brandy.

He did that by breaking Reyes' three straight serves—on the 5th, 7th and 9th.

After reaching the hill with a run out, Chamat got a chance to close out the match as Reyes missed a tough angular shot on the blue two with the table offering an easy layout.

But an errant shot on the pink four by the Swede allowed Reyes to close in at 7-8.

The alternate break format, however, prevented Reyes from inflicting further damage as Chamat pulled off some tricky shots to ran out the clincher.

Reyes took the first three racks after winning the lag, thanks to a muffed bank shot by Chamat on the nine-ball in the second frame.

Chamat, a semifinalist in the world pool last year, broke back on the fifth and knotted the count with a golden break on the following rack.

Chamat's victory overshadowed Marlon Manalo's masterful 9-4 demolition of American Corey.

The win extended Manalo's unbeaten run to 17. His streak earned Manalo consecutive titles in the US pool circuit.

Other opening round winners were Mika Immonen of Finland and Rodney Morris of the US. Immonen nipped Roberto Gomez, 9-7, while Morris edged Malaysian Ibrahim Bin Amir, 9-8.

Miñozas head Amateur Tour cast

THE FAMED Miñoza family of golfers banner the cast for the second leg of the Samsung Amateur Tour at the Pueblo de Oro Golf and Country Club in Cagayan de Oro.

Of the four golfers bearing the same family name who joined last time, it was only former national player Ben Miñoza who emerged the winner as brother Paul lost his bid in the 72-hole championship class and so did sister Eva and grandmother Inday in the 36-hole ladies division.

All four are kin of the imminent Frankie Miñoza, who finished tied for 16th in the Brunei Open yesterday after a final round 65.

There will be no more than 120 players seeing action in the Mindanao stop of the tourney organized by the Professional Sports Management Group and also in the roster is the president of the club, Rudy Menes.

Also sponsored by Tokyo Tokyo, KZG, Microtel, Coppertone Sport, Srixon, Philippine Airlines, Sunbolt, Rudy Project, C-Lium Fiber and Sports Plus. Media partners are Wave 89.1, Jam 88.3, 89.9, 99.5 RT. 103.5 K-Lite and Killer Bee, the main division will not feature its defending champion Juvic Pagunsan, leaving the race wide open.

Expected to battle it out for the top plum are the members of the Del Monte team including club champion Paul Miñoza, Yoyong Velez, Tristan Tabanas, Joel Opaco, Louie Dakudao and Lino Retuerto. Three members of the national caddies stable are also flying to Cagayan de Oro for an exposure trip.

Simultaneous with the first two days of championship play are the competitions in Classes C and D and the three handicap classes in the ladies division. And also happening on the final two days of action which will feature only the top 10 players in the main division are the battles for the Class A and Class B titles. Call the PSMG at 635-0010.

RACING TIPS

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Race 1—1. Rosebud 2. Tomoko Kirei 3. Red Hot Water/China Girl 4. Armour of Lights
Race 2—1. My Little Pet 2. Come in Glory 3. Diamond Charlie
Race 3—1. U Are My Sunshine 2. La Signorina 3. Red Bells 4. Aya's Star
Race 4—1. Mikaela Mia 2. Red Heart 3. Interceptor 4. Sun Power
Race 5—1. Blue Sheikh 2. Nitty Gritty 3. Cat Prince 4. Time Deposit/Banknet
Race 6—1. Magic Bullet 2. Fre Rein 3. Bashful Lady 4. Something Silver
Race 7—1. Decidido 2. Fantasia 3. Titan 4. Blue Bolero 5. Material Trick
Race 8—1. Holy King 2. Schwarzenegger 3. Silver Cho Cho 4. Raven 5. Top Quest 6. Solomioh

When referees spoil the party

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE FAVORITES prevailed but not after experiencing anxious moments against semifinal opponents that were suddenly of championship caliber at crunch time.

When you come down to it, the breaks didn't go the underdogs' way.

Mercifully, they went the top dogs' way.

Who said sports is fair?

San Miguel Beer and Talk 'N Text eliminated Red Bull Barako and Shell by similar scores of 3-1 on Sunday in their best-of-five semifinals that missed a deciding Game 5 due to the confluence of events that chiefly hit Red Bull and Shell.

Enrico Villanueva, a major cog in the Red Bull rotation, went out due to a nose injury early in the game, and the Barako sorely missed his big rebounds after he was taken to the Chinese General Hospital for observation of a suspected broken nose bridge.

He would not come back again and Red Bull struggled at the paint.

That became evident when, with about 2 ticks remaining, Dondon Hontiveros grabbed a crucial rebound that, who knows, would have been Villanueva's, given Enrico's fabled endgame aggressiveness.

Hontiveros got bottled up underneath but he was able to fling what proved to be the most important pass of the night. The pass fell into the hands of Danny Ildefonso, who unleashed a short lob shot from about 10 feet and it hit nothing but net with .8 of a second.

The winning shot gave San Miguel a final 2-point margin, ending a magical odyssey for Red Bull that will continue to be the talk of the town for years to come.

But while the Barako were victims of bad breaks, the Shell Turbochargers were to lick wounds that will take long to heal.

Shell had risen from the grave of a 19-point deficit to wrest the lead in the homestretch.

When Talk 'N Text tied it, Shell could have won it in regulation had Ajani Williams, usually deadly at the perimeter, buried a jumper from left with time expiring.

In overtime, it was touch and go and the underdog Shell was in the thick of things.

And then the fouls that were as ugly as the tape tirades against GMA hit Shell, effectively demolishing the Turbochargers' momentum.

When Williams got his sixth foul in a controversial control-for-ball scramble with fellow import, Jerald Honeycutt, at Shell's front court, Shell's chances did not only dim.

They got killed, for rare is the time when a team minus an import in the endgame would pull it out of the fire.

By disqualifying Williams on a sixth foul when the game was literally on the line, the referees dashed all hopes of a monumental Shell upset. When Bob Kanapi, the Shell manager, poured his heart out in complaining to Commissioner Eala of what he said was spotty officiating, I couldn't blame him.

I cite the foul on Williams, which I believe was dubious.

From where I sat at ringside, I could see that it appeared more like Honeycutt was the culprit instead of Williams, who was set to receive a bounce pass near the right baseline when the TNT import tried to swipe the ball away from behind.

I could be wrong. But a player clearly set to receive the ball up front and then start to protect the ball with his body from a harassing player, why he is perfectly doing it legal.

After his encounter with Kanapi, who was almost in tears pleading Shell's case, Eala quickly assembled the referees and the PBA technical committee into a private room.

Well, if something good came out of it, good.

But I guarantee you no matter the outcome of that huddle, it will not appease Bob Kanapi. Never.

Closing birdie hands Birdie US Open plum

BIRDIE Kim hoists US Women's Open trophy. AP

ENGLEWOOD, COLORADO—Birdie Kim blasted a stunning 60-foot bunker shot into the cup on the 72nd hole here Sunday to capture the US Women's Open as Annika Sorenstam and Michelle Wie collapsed in their bids for history.

The 23-year-old South Korean connected on one of the greatest clutch shots in major golf history, blasting the ball high and 12 feet into the air to an elevated green, where it rolled into the cup for a jaw-dropping birdie to win.

Filipina Jennifer Rosales carded a 75 and wound up in an eight-way logjam for 23rd at 296. Also in the group was top favorite Sorenstam and amateur sensation Wie.

Fil-Am Dorothy Delasin also fired a 75 and ended sharing 47th with two others at 301.

"I'm not a good bunker player. Finally I made it," Kim said. "It's just amazing. I can't believe it. I just tried to get it close. I just tried to par. I never thought about the ball going in the hole."

By living up to her name, the golfer known last year as Ju-Yun Kim finished her final round on one-over par 72 and completed 72 holes on three-over par 287 to beat US amateurs Brittany Lang, 19, and Morgan Pressel, 17, by two strokes.

"Everybody likes this name," Kim said. "Everybody says it's a good name for golf."

Lang took a bogey at the 18th from the same bunker where Kim made history while Pressel, who would have been the youngest man or woman to win a golf major, blew a birdie chance at 17 and missed a desperation chip at 18.

Kim and Pressel were even as they began the final hole but Kim made the only weekend birdie on the hole and just the fourth of the week, a spectacular shot to win an unlikely crown after missing the cut in 24 of 33 prior LPGA starts.

Kim became the third Korean to win a women's golf major, following Grace Park at last year's Kraft Nabisco and Se Ri Pak's multiple victories, and was only the third US Women's Open debutante to win the title.

Sorenstam won the first two majors of the year but her "Soren-Slam" dreams fell apart with a 77 that left her nine strokes behind Kim.

Wie, a 15-year-old high school sophomore, shared the lead entering the final round but fell apart under the tension, soaring to an 82. *AFP*

Harrington eagles 18th, cops crown

HARRISON, New York—Padraig Harrington was just trying to get it close.

Instead, the Irish star ended up closing out Jim Furyk in dramatic fashion Sunday, holing a big-breaking 65-foot eagle putt on the final hole to beat the 2003 US Open champion by a stroke in the Barclays Classic.

"I was just trying to two-putt. Trying to get it down there close," Harrington said. "I'm a total realist in those situations. If you'd offered me 3 or 4 feet, I probably would have said, 'All right, I'll take that.'"

Harrington took advantage of Furyk's late meltdown at sun-baked Westchester Country Club for his second PGA Tour victory of the season, overcoming a three-stroke deficit with five holes to play.

Harrington closed with a 1-under 70 for a 10-under 274 total. The nine-time European tour winner won the tournament a year after losing a playoff to Sergio Garcia in his first appearance in the event.

"To hole a putt like that on the final hole is very special. Very special," Harrington said. "Normally, you have a short putt or two putts to win."

Harrington, who beat Vijay Singh in the Honda Classic in early March to become the first player from the Republic of Ireland to win a PGA Tour event, walked off with the $1,035,000 first-place check after Furyk let it slip away with consecutive bogeys on Nos. 16 and 17.

Furyk left a long birdie try 4 feet left of the hole on the 372-yard 17th and missed his par attempt to drop into a tie with Harrington, setting up the dramatic finish on the par-5 closing hole.

"I opened the door a little bit with the bogey on 16 and then missing the short one on 17," Furyk said. "I make that putt 99 percent of the time."

After Harrington holed the 65-footer—his second eagle putt of the day—to clinch the victory, Furyk made a 10-foot birdie putt for a 71.

Furyk, winless in 39 events since the 2003 Buick Open, has three runner-up finishes this year, including a playoff loss to Singh in the Wachovia Championship.

Kenny Perry (71), Brad Faxon (73) and Brian Gay (73) tied for third at 5 under, Dean Wilson (71) was 4 under back and Billy Mayfair (66), Singh (73), Justin Leonard (71) and John Senden (73) followed at 3 under. Singh, the 1993 and 1995 winner, was 5 over on his final 24 holes. *AP*

Federer, Davenport remain in title hunt

LONDON—Top seeds Roger Federer and Lindsay Davenport remain in the hunt for glory at the start of Wimbledon's second week.

Following rare failure in the opening two grand slams of the year, only a third successive Wimbledon title will be good enough for Swiss Federer who meets Spain's Juan Carlos Ferrero on Monday.

Davenport, winner in 1999, takes on former world no. 1 Kim Clijsters in an appetizing re-run of their French Open meeting.

Clijsters' former fiance, 2002 winner Lleyton Hewitt, must beat American Taylor Dent in his bid for a quarterfinal place.

Still striving for his first Wimbledon title, number two seed Andy Roddick takes on Argentine Guillermo Coria while Mario Ancic, semifinalist last year, plays Spaniard Feliciano Lopez.

Russian women abound in the second week. Defending champion Maria Sharapova takes on Natalie Dechy, Svetlana Kuznetsova and Nadia Petrova are both in action and sixth seed Elena Dementieva faces willowy ninth seed Anastasia Myskina.

Twice champion Venus Williams will be looking to restore family pride when she faces her sister Serena's conqueror, Jill Craybas. *Reuters*

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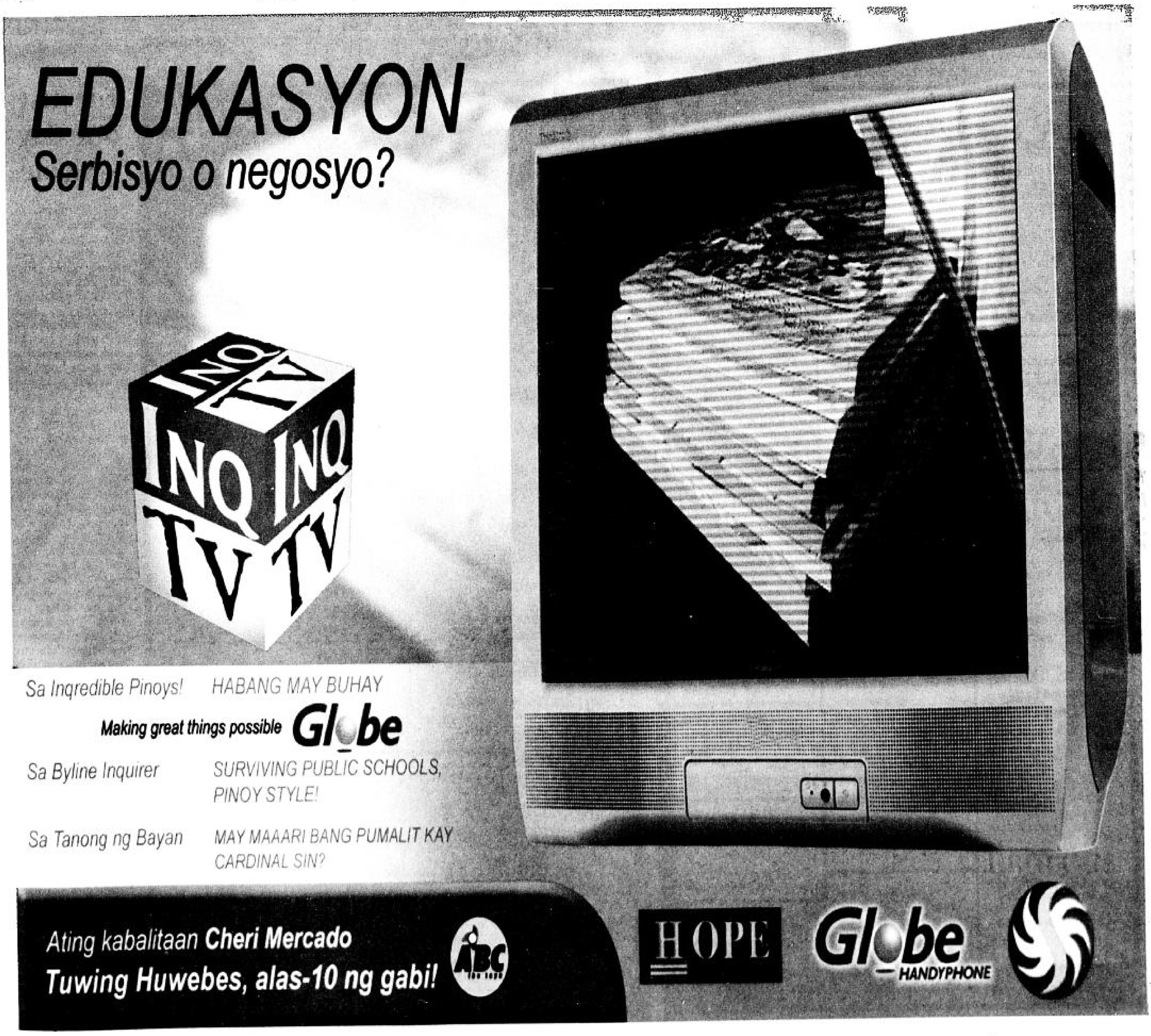
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ABC
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With her court date moved again, Nora's 'ordinary' life goes on

By Janet Susan R. Nepales, *LA Correspondent*
and Epee R. Rafanan, *Contributor*

LOS ANGELES—The preliminary hearing of Nora Aunor's drug possession case has been moved again, this time to July 25, according to the Filipino singer-actress' defense lawyer.

In a statement issued to the INQUIRER, lawyer Claire Espina said the reason for this latest postponement was, "the independent specimen results requested by defense have not been received."

The preliminary hearing, originally set for May 26, had been reset to June 27 (today, June 28, in Manila).

Nora pleaded not guilty to the charge before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Paula Adele Mabrey on April 21 at the Los Angeles Airport courthouse. During the arraignment, Mabrey granted three motions: for evidence split, for the waiver of appearance by the defendant except for trial and other evidentiary hearings, and for a Tagalog interpreter at all hearings.

The case against the "Superstar" stemmed from her arrest at the Los Angeles International Airport on March 30 for alleged possession of eight grams of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu.

And so meanwhile, in San Francisco—after a series of concerts in the last two months for her devoted immigrant fans—Nora carries on with the "ordinary life" that she has come to relish.

She has been in the United States since August 2004. Earlier media accounts of her stay had her saying how much she enjoyed the opportunity to lead a semi-normal life. Here, she said, she gets to do ordinary things, like shopping at the mall and taking public transport. "Semi-normal," she explained, because although admirers still approached her occasionally, she was no longer mobbed by crowds.

'Guilty' of liking the US as her second home

Nora admitted that, being a shy person, she would often get embarrassed when she hears non-Filipinos ask why people gathered around her.

In any case, for the first time in her life, she has a driver's license. She was proud to announce that she passed each of the driving tests "on take one."

The multi-awarded actress' latest accomplishment is her third international Best Actress award, this one from the Brussels International Film Festival 2005 (the previous two from Cairo and Malaysia in the 1990s) for her portrayal of a lady judge involved in a May-December love affair with a cab driver. The movie, "Naglalayag," is currently doing the rounds of film festivals. It was exhibited at the New York Filipino Film Festival earlier this month. Next stop is the Sine! Sine! Film Festival organized for the Filipino American Arts Exposition in August at the Century 20 Theaters in Daly City.

She is wrapping up negotiations for "Alay ni Ate Guy sa 'Merika," to be produced by avowed Noranians Cora Salumbides and Vicky Nubla, both community leaders in Vallejo. The show will be presented by Ace Entertainment International at The Banquet, Vallejo Plaza, on July 10. Comedienne Fe de los Reyes and the St. Patrick Festival Choir are the special guests.

For more information, call (510) 6918132.

For just one day —Nicole

LOS ANGELES—Nicole Kidman would love to have a witch's powers for a day—especially when she's having a bad day.

"It's kind of nice to be able to . . . walk through and blow up the cappuccino machine and make a dog jump into your arms and make him speak in tongues," Kidman told reporters recently, according to AP Radio.

In the new film "Bewitched," an adaptation of the classic TV show, Kidman plays Isabel Bigelow, a blissfully naive (and good) witch who wants to give up her supernatural powers for mundane, suburban, mortal life.

The Oscar-winning actress said she needed two things to help her learn how to twitch her nose as Elizabeth Montgomery had done on the 1960s sitcom.

"I needed a mirror. And I needed the slo-mo on the video in the VCR. And I would put her nose in slow motion. And then I would put the mirror and I would try to mimic it."

Kidman also needed help sitting on her broom in a ladylike pose.

"They had a harness. You get a harness on and then they lift it up and you're like flying and you're saying 'Does this look OK?' 'Cross your legs!'" *AP*

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2 OPEN JUNE 29, WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 OPEN JUNE 29, HAPPYLY EVER AFTER
4 SOON TO OPEN

THE MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 KILITI
3 SIN CITY
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA 2000
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 NASAAN KA MAN
2 BATMAN BEGINS
3 KILITI

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 BATMAN BEGINS

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 KILITI
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) BATMAN BEGINS
5 NASAAN KA MAN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) BATMAN BEGINS
2 NASAAN KAMAN
3 (DTS ES) MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 A LOT LIKE LOVE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) STARWARS: EPISODE-3
2 GRACIA
3 LIGAYA KATUMBAS AY BUHAY
4 (DTS) SHAOLIN VS' EVILDEAD

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) BATMAN BEGINS
2 A LOT LIKE LOVE
3 (DTS) NASAAN KA MAN
4 GRACIA
5 MR. & MRS. SMITH

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 MR. & MRS. SMITH
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 (DOLBY) BATMAN BEGINS
6 MONSTER IN LAW

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 NASAAN KA MAN
2 A LOT LIKE LOVE
3 (DOLBY) MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 (DTS) BATMAN BEGINS

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 MADAGASCAR
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 (DTS) NASAAN KA MAN
4 (DOLBY) BATMAN BEGINS

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 NASAAN KA MAN
2 PREMONITION
3 (DOLBY) MADAGASCAR
4 (DTS) SIN CITY

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 MR. & MRS. SMITH
3 A LOT LIKE LOVE
4 NASAAN KA MAN

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007
1 (DOLBY) IN GOOD COMPANY
2 RESERVED

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 STARWARS: EPISODE-3
2 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 SILANG MGA RAMPADORA
2 NASAAN KA MAN

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Araneta Center Leisure Guide

The Gateway Pavilion

CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway CINEPLEX 10
LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P140 BATMAN BEGINS
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO GALAXY 1:25 / 4:05 / 6:45 / 9:25
MR & MRS SMITH 1:30 / 4:10 / 6:50 / 9:30
MONSTER IN LAW 1:25 / 4:05 / 6:45 / 9:25
BATMAN BEGINS 12:20/ 1:00 / 3:10 / 3.50 / 6.00/ 6:40 / 8:50 / 9:30
HOTEL RWANDA 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
NASAAN KA MAN 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
WAR OF THE WORLDS ADVANCE SCREENING 10 PM

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
ADMISSION : P 299 / Globe Platinum Subscribers P249
BATMAN BEGINS 1:40 / 4:30 / 7:20 / 10:10

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ NASAAN KA MAN 12:20 / 2:50 / 5:20 / 7:50
❷ BATMAN BEGINS 11:15 / 2:15 / 5:15 / 8:15
❸ MR & MRS SMITH 12:10 / 2:50 / 5:30 / 8:10
❹ MONSTER IN LAW 12:40 / 3:20 / 6:00 / 8:40
❺ HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO GALAXY 12:40 / 3:20 / 6:00 / 8:40
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
July 1, Friday 2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE - FINALS 4:45pm Red Bull vs Shell / 7.35pm San Miguel vs Talk N Text
ULTIMATE SHOWDOWN ATENEO - LA SALLE BASKETBALL CLASSIC July 2, Sat, 1pm & 3pm
July 3, Sunday 2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE FINALS: GAME 2 6:40 pm Talk N Text vs San Miguel
July 6, Wednesday 2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE FINALS: GAME 3 7:30 pm Talk N Text vs San Miguel

CENTER EVENTS
SALE EVENTS: Celine Sale with up to 50% off on selected items from July 1 to 31 at Level 2 of Gateway Mall
Bayo Sale with up to 50% off on selected items from July 8 to 24 at Level 3 of Gateway Mall
EXHIBIT: Herbie: Fully Loaded life-size replica on display from July 7 to 13 at the Gateway Cineplex 10 lobby
SPECIAL APPEARANCE: Neil Gaiman Book Signing on July 11, 4pm at Fully Booked on Level 2 of Gateway Mall

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

More stars fight back

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

NO SOONER had we written our recent piece about Hollywood stars deciding to fight back against fans and the paparazzi who intruded into their private lives, that three more troubling instances of media abuse presented themselves in quick order:

First, **Lindsay Lohan**'s car was rammed by a pursuing photographer's vehicle , causing some damage and a lot of bruised feelings.

Next, **Leonardo Di Caprio** was hit in the head with a bottle wielded by a woman, necessitating medical help for the dazed actor.

Finally, **Tom Cruise** was spritzed by an interviewer while in England to promote his latest starrer, "War of the Worlds." This last assault was recorded by video cameras and shown all over the globe, so it serves as the most visible new example of some people's rude and cruel treatment of celebrities.

It turned out that the interviewer had planned to spritz Cruise in order to get footage for a new TV show in which celebrities were supposed to be the clueless fall guys.

Now, that's taking "reality TV" to a new low.

Well, the interviewer's intention may have been lighthearted and comical, but Cruise sure didn't take it that way. While wiping the spritzed water away from his handsome face, he held his temper and briefly but succinctly lectured the smug interloper about accepted and acceptable behavior.

We admired Cruise for keeping his cool, and for refraining from spritzing his tormentor back—with a more foul-smelling liquid than just water.

And that isn't the end to this story: The police collared the interloping interviewer and his associates, and threatened to charge them with assault.

Served them right, too. Just because somebody's making millions from being famous, that doesn't give everybody else the right to invade his private space.

Cruise decided to drop his complaints against the pranksters, but Scotland Yard said that did not mean they would not face assault charges just the same.

Quick on the Drew

OTHER ways that the stars have been fighting back:

Photographed on the sly at an airport, **Drew Barrymore** took out her own camera, and shot a photo of the paparazzo who had just photographed her.

Was she returning the "compliment?"

No, she was generating evidence to use against the guy, should she think of filing a formal complaint against him.

Other stars have shielded their faces with umbrellas, removed the film from paparazzi's cameras, hired security to keep photographers at bay, or secured court orders to compel stalkers to keep distance.

Thus have they been trying to rationalize the increasingly exploitative relationship between stars and the entertainment press, particularly the gonzo and guerrilla paparazzi.

It's a confoundingly complex relationship, because stars need the media to become and remain popular—but, when the media goes beyond its work and intrudes excessively into celebrities' private lives, it really is time to fight back.

'La Femme Nikita'

THE COMPLETE second season of the TV series, "La Femme Nikita," is now in six-disc collectors' DVD set. Aside from all 22 episodes, the disc set includes audio commentary by director **Jon Cassar**, story editor **Michael Loceff**, and executive consultant **Joel Surnow**; deleted scenes from eight episodes, with director's introduction, and a gag reel.

Season two kicks into high gear after Nikita's survival after the destruction of a Freedom League hideout in the first season's final episode. Since then, she's been on the run from Section One.

While working as a waitress, Nikita is captured by the Freedom League, and is used as bait to lure Section One into a trap. Nikita's life and the ultimate survival of Section One itself are on the line.

'The Love Album'

NONOY Zuñiga's "The Love Album," a romantic collection of old favorites, has turned gold. Nonoy's strong comeback album is his first under his new contract with Viva Gold.

Audience response to the first two singles from the album, "Too Shy to Say" and "Moon River," has been enthusiastic.

Other cuts are "What Matters Most," "I'll Be Seeing You," "Someone Who Cares," "The Way You Look Tonight," "I Wanna Be Free," "If," "I Only Have Eyes for You," "Until It's Time for You to Go," "In My Life," and "When I Fall in Love," which Nonoy performs with **Regine Velasquez.**

'Masahista'

BRILLANTE Mendoza's film, "Masahista (The Masseur)," has been accepted for competition by the 2005 Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland. Gee Entertainment and Centerstage Productions are hosting a private screening of the film at MyCinema, Greenbelt 3, 6 p.m. on June 28.

20th anniversary show

KAPIHAN sa Manila, the original breakfast forum, marks its 20th anniversary at the Fiesta Pavilion of the Manila Hotel with a special show, "20 Million Cups Served, And Still Serving."

The anniversary show features **Pilita Corrales, Jose Mari Chan, Nonoy Zuñiga, Juan Rodrigo** and **Marri Nallos.** Call 758-3228.

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 BATMAN BEGINS
MTRCB. GP
1:00, 4:00, 7:00
2 MR.& MRS. SMITH
MTRCB. PG-13
1:50, 4:30, 7:10
3 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE H2G2
MTRCB. GP
11:30, 2:05,4:40,7:15,9:50
4 MONSTER-IN-LAW
MTRCB. PG-13
11:35, 2:00, 4:25, 6:50, 9:15
PREMIERE THEATRE HOTEL RWANDA
MTRCB R-13 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
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GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 BATMAN BEGINS 10:30, 1:35, 4:40 7:45, 10:50 GP
2 MR. & MRS. SMITH 12:20, 3:00, 5:40 PG-13
ADVANCE SCREENING WAR OF THE WORLDS 10:00 PM PG-13
3 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY 12:35, 3:10, 5:40 8:20, 10:50 GP
4 MONSTER-IN-LAW 12:20, 2:55, 5:30 8:05, 10:40 PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
HOTEL RWANDA 12:10,2:40,5:10,7:40,10:10
BATMAN BEGINS GP 1:30,4:20,7:10,10:10
THE HITCHHIKER GP 1:10,3:30.5:50,8:10,10:30
BATMAN BEGINS GP 12:20.3:10 MONSTER IN LAW PG13 6:05,8:25
MR. & MRSSMITH R13 12:05,2:35,5:05,7:35,10:05
MONSTER IN LAW PG13 12:55,3:15,5.35,7:55,10:15

star group of cinemas movie guide
IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
starmall EDSA-SHAW Tel. No. 726.61.50
3 Nasaan Ka Man
4 Batman Begins
5 Mr & Mrs Smith
P75 Lang Dolby Digital Pa Experience @ Starmall Edsa 4 & 5 Metropolis 5
METROPOLIS ALABANG star Tel. No. 850.42.85
1 Kakaibang Karisma
2 Mr & Mrs Smith
3 Under Renovation
4 Under Renovation
5 Batman Begins
6 Nasaan Ka Man
starmall LAS PIÑAS Tel. No. 873.50.04
1 Sin City
2 Rental Reservation
JAYA @ Starmall Edsa June 18 Saturday
Diether Ocampo @ Metropolis June 19 Sunday

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CINEMA 1 MR. & MRS. SMITH PG13 11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50
CINEMA 2 BATMAN BEGINS GP 12:00, 2:50, 5:40, 8:30,
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX
PROMENADE GREENHILLS
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NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 HITCHHIKERS GUIDE TO GALAXY GP 10:40, 1:05, 3:25, 5:45, 8:05,10:25
CINEMA 4 MONSTER-IN-LAW PG13 11:40, 2:20, 5:00. 7:40, 10:20
CINEMA 5 BATMAN BEGINS GP 10:30, 1:20, 4:10, 7:00, 9:50
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JULY 29 & 30 SOULSISTERS 8PM
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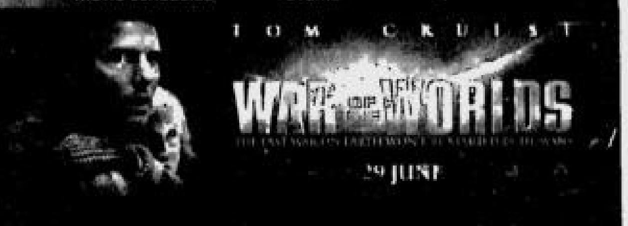
• HAPPILY EVER AFTER
• FANTASTIC FOUR
• MONSTER-IN-LAW



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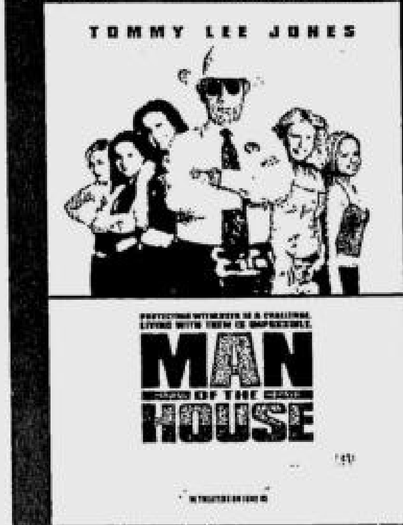
1 BATMAN BEGINS 12:30FS/01:00MF/04:00 06:20LFS/07:00LMF/09:20END
WAR OF THE WORLDS 10:00LFS/10:30LMF/12:30END
2 MONSTER-IN-LAW 11:20FS/11:50MF/02:05/04:25 06:05LFS/06:40LMF/09:20END
WAR OF THE WORLDS 10:00LFS/10:30LMF/12:30END
megamall 633-1901
BATMAN BEGINS 11:40FS/12:10MF/03:00/05:50 08:10LFS/08:40LMF/11:00END
cebu (032) 231-3876
1 MR. & MRS. SMITH 11:40FS/11:50MF/02:15/04:40/07:05 08:05LFS/09:30LFS/11:30END
2 BATMAN BEGINS 11:00FS/11:10MF/01:45/04:30/05:55 08:15LFS/09:30LMF/11:50END
3 HOUSE OF WAX 11:30FS/11:30MF/01:30/03:30/05:30/07:30 09:24LFS/09:30LMF/11:15END
sm exclusive sm exclusive sm exclusive sm exclusive sm exclusive sm exclusive sm exclusive sm exclusive sm exclusive



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3 MONSTER-IN-LAW
4 BATMAN BEGINS
5 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7 SHUTTER
8 ICE PRINCESS
9 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
10 MR. & MRS. SMITH
11 NASAAN KA MAN
12 HOTEL RWANDA
sm city fairview
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2 SIN CITY
3 PREMONITION
4 MR. & MRS. SMITH
5 NASAAN KA MAN
6 MONSTER-IN-LAW
7 BATMAN BEGINS
8 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
9 SHUTTER
10 SAY THAT YOU LOVE ME
11 A LOT LIKE LOVE
12 MADAGASCAR
sm north edsa
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 MR. & MRS. SMITH
3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 MONSTER-IN-LAW
5 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
6 HOTEL RWANDA
7 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
sm city sta mesa
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
4 MONSTER-IN-LAW
5 MR. & MRS. SMITH
6 SHUTTER
7 UNLEASHED
8 MAN OF THE HOUSE
9 KILITI
10 A LOT LIKE LOVE
sm city southmall
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 MONSTER-IN-LAW
3 MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
5 STARWARS: EPISODE III
6 SHUTTER
7 BATMAN BEGINS
8 NASAAN KA MAN
9 SIN CITY
10 MADAGASCAR
sm city manila
1 MONSTER-IN-LAW
2 BATMAN BEGINS
3 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE
4 MR. & MRS. SMITH
5 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
6 HOTEL RWANDA
7 PREMONITION
8 BATMAN BEGINS
9 NASAAN KA MAN
10 HOUSE OF WAX
11 A LOT LIKE LOVE
12 SHUTTER
sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
sm supercenter sucat
1 MONSTER-IN-LAW
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
4 BATMAN BEGINS
sm city bicutan
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 MONSTER-IN-LAW
4 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
LUZON
sm city pampanga
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 SIN CITY
3 MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 PREMONITION
5 IN GOOD COMPANY
6 NASAAN KA MAN
sm city bacoor
1 KILITI
2 SHUTTER
3 BATMAN BEGINS
4 MONSTER IN LAW
5 MR. & MRS. SMITH
6 NASAAN KA MAN
7 PREMONITION
8 BATMAN BEGINS
sm city dasmariñas
1 PREMONITION
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 BATMAN BEGINS
sm city lucena
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 A LOT LIKE LOVE
3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 MR. & MRS. SMITH
sm city baguio
1 A LOT LIKE LOVE
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 BATMAN BEGINS
sm city marilao
1 HOUSE OF WAX
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 MR. & MRS. SMITH
4 BATMAN BEGINS
sm city cagayan de oro
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 UNLEASHED
4 MR. & MRS. SMITH
VISAYAS AND MINDANAO
sm city cebu
1 MR. & MRS. SMITH
2 BATMAN BEGINS
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 A LOT LIKE LOVE
5 MADAGASCAR
6 SHUTTER
7 NASAAN KA MAN
8 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
sm city iloilo
1 HOUSE OF WAX
2 RESERVED
3 BATMAN BEGINS
4 MR. & MRS. SMITH
5 NASAAN KA MAN
6 UNLEASHED
7 RESERVED
8 COACH CARTER
sm city davao
1 HOUSE OF WAX
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 A LOT LIKE LOVE
5 MR. & MRS. SMITH
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GALLERIA 632-9115/16

1 BATMAN BEGINS • THX
12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30

2 BATMAN BEGINS
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

3 THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO GALAXY
12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

4 HOTEL RWANDA
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

5 MONSTER-IN-LAW
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

6 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

7 A LOT LIKE LOVE
2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

8 NASAAN KA MAN
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

9 SHUTTER
12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00

10 MADAGASCAR
1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 MONSTER-IN-LAW
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

2 SHUTTER
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 HOTEL RWANDA
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

4 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 BATMAN BEGINS
12:00 3:15 6:30 9:45

6 THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

7 NASAAN KA MAN
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 SHUTTER
2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00

2 A LOT LIKE LOVE
12:05 2:20 4:30 6:45 9:00

3 KILITI
12:50 3:35 6:20 9:05

4 MONSTER-IN-LAW
1:25 4:00 6:35 9:10

5 THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 9:00

6 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
12:00 2:25 4:45 7:15 9:30

7 BATMAN BEGINS
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

8 NASAAN KA MAN
12:55 3:35 6:15 9:00

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
2 BATMAN BEGINS
3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 KILITI

PIONEER 687-5378

1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
3 THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO GALAXY
4 MONSTER-IN-LAW

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The WAR starts on ***JUNE 28 (Tuesday)***
at **10:00 PM** (simul - US)

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Regular showing on June 29

TOM CRUISE
WAR OF THE WORLDS

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1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 MR. AND MRS. SMITH

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 UNLEASHED
4 HOUSE OF WAX

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 SIN CITY
2 SHUTTER
3 NASAAN KA MAN
4 BATMAN BEGINS

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
4 A LOT LIKE LOVE

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1 NASAAN KA MAN
2 MR. AND MRS. SMITH
3 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 BATMAN BEGINS

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6 MR. AND MRS. SMITH

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2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 A LOT LIKE LOVE
5 UNLEASHED
6 MR. AND MRS. SMITH

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2 NASAAN KA MAN
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 UNLEASHED
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 MR. & MRS. SMITH	2 BATMAN BEGINS	3 THX BATMAN BEGINS 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 HOTEL RWANDA	5 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY	6 MOSNTER-IN-LAW	7 NASAAN KA MAN
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 MR. & MRS. SMITH 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9.30	2 BATMAN BEGINS 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX MONSTER-IN-LAW 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX BATMAN BEGINS 2:25, 5:10, 7:55, 10:40 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 NASAAN KA MAN 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00 BATMAN BEGINS 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 MR. & MRS. SMITH 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX MONSTER-IN-LAW	2 BATMAN BEGINS		
	3 MR. & MRS. SMITH	4 HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY	5 NASAAN KA MAN	
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⑦ Batman begins

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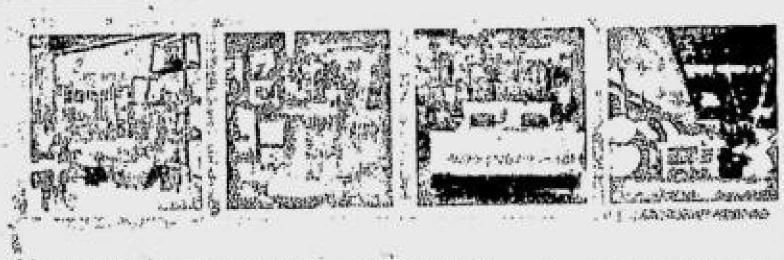


The Home Finds of Angel Jacob, Christine Bersola-Babao, Ces Drilon and Rico Blanco

With the special participation of Ana Rocha-Castillo

June 15-July 15, 2005
Home Market, 3rd Level

What celebrities can live without

CELEBRITIES lead such glamorous lives. They can have everything money can buy. VIP treatment awaits them wherever they go. Some stars even make unreasonable demands just for the heck of it. For instance, I heard that Janet Jackson wants her makeup room filled up with black roses before a concert. Another Hollywood star requires loads of M & M's—only the brown ones—as she prepares to go on cam. But the trappings of success can also turn into a trap if they're not handled properly.

With that in mind, I asked some stars what they could live without. You'll be surprised to know that not all celebrities are slaves to fortune. Ever wonder, if you were in their shoes, what could you do without, considering that everything is yours for the taking and everyone is at your disposal?

If there's anything I learned from my growing up in show biz it's that the best things in life aren't things. True richness is not measured in the abundance of our possessions but in the fewness of our wants.

The stars reveal... the things they need least:

Cesar Montano—mayonnaise, shampoo, underwear

Aiko Melendez—makeup, soft drinks, miniskirts

Albert Martinez—cellphone, car, laptop

Ivan Mayrina—comb, jewelry, aircon

Nina—pizza, boyfriend, fame

Gary Estrada—cigarettes, jewelry, vegetables

Francis M—guns, cigarettes

Marjorie Barretto—makeup, coffee, dessert

Regine Tolentino—anything techie (laptop, cellphone), junk food, sex

Rufa Mae Quinto—exercise, computer, helpers

DOLLYWOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

Guess list

GUESS who this actress is! She went hysterical because she found out that her "imaginary" TV host/actor boyfriend is dating a show biz wannabe. The three of them have a show together. Ms Mestiza's mom is the ultimate stage mother who has become a laughingstock in the industry. The funny thing is, there's really nothing going on between this actress and the actor... so what is she so mad about? Or is she just a born madwoman? Congenital defect's effect?

Guess who this young female TV host is! She was spotted with a tomboy in the MRT. They were laughing like crazy, and they both looked so dirty, oblivious to the other commuters. My source says they seemed high on drugs. She adds that maybe the reason that the TV host figured in an accident during her show recently was simple paranoia, which all junkies suffer from. Paranoid develops our imagined fears instantly, like Polaroid!

Jasmine Trias, the Filipino-American third placer in last year's "American Idol," will have her self-titled debut album in stores July 12, 2005. Her new CD introduces an edgier, rhythm and blues-based sound—from the single, "Excuses" (already No. 10 in the Philippines) to "Sexy Boy," with its playful and relaxed grooves.

The Fil-Am star's album is being distributed throughout the United States, the Philippines, and Japan by Universal Music and Aloha Music. It contains 14 songs produced and written by multiplatinum industry leaders, like **Diane Warren** and **Vincent Herbert**, and a remake by **Sean "P. Diddy" Combs**. Visit www.jasminetrias.net or www.allthatjas.net for her tour schedule.

Jasmine herself posts personal updates on www.myspace.com/Jasmine_Trias.

(For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangri-la@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com)

Famas 2005 winners

Best Picture—"Naglalayag," of Angora Films

Best Director—**Maryo J. de los Reyes** for "Naglalayag"

Best Actor—**Piolo Pascual**, "Milan," Star Cinema

Best Actress—**Claudine Barretto**, "Milan," Star Cinema

Best Supporting Actor—**Dennis Trillo**, "Aishite Imatsu," Regal Films

Best Supporting Actress—**Alec Bovick** for "Naglalayag"

Best Child Actor—**John Vladimir Manalo**, "Feng Shui," Star Cinema

Best Child Actress—**Julianne Gomez**, "Feng Shui," Star Cinema

Screenplay—**Cris Vertido**, "Panaghoy sa Suba," CM Films

Story—**Irma Dimaranan**, "Naglalayag"

Cinematography—**Odyssey** Flores, "Naglalayag"

Editing—**Jess Navarro**, "Naglalayag"

Theme Song—"Naglalayag," **Rey Valera**, interpreted by **Bituin Escalante**

Art Direction—**Joey Luna**, "Aishite Imatsu"

Special Awards

Lou Salvador Sr. Memorial Award—**Don Pepot**

Atty. Flavio G. Macaso—**Joelad Santos**

Dr. Jose Perez Memorial Award—**Ronald Constantino**

Famas Golden Artist Award—**Lea Salonga**

Lifetime Achievement Award—**Pilita Corrales**

German Moreno Youth Achievement Awards—**Angel Locsin and Dennis Trillo**

Mr. and Miss Famas Popularity—Angel Locsin and **Richard Gutierrez**

Mr. and Miss Famas Screen Idols—**Bea Alonzo and Piolo Pascual**

Presidential Awardee—**Ramon Revilla Sr.**

Huwarang Bituin ng Famas—**Dolphy**

Circle of Excellence—**Christopher de Leon**

Posthumous Award, Natatanging Alagad ng Sining—**Fernando Poe Jr.**

Special Citation for Theater Excellence—**Jon Joven**

Special Recognition to Showbiz Clans—Eigenmann, Cruz, Gutierrez, Quizon, Fernandez, Revilla, De Leon, Estrada

PIOLO Pascual, Best Actor and Claudine Barretto, Best Actress

RUDY ESPERAS

Walkout!

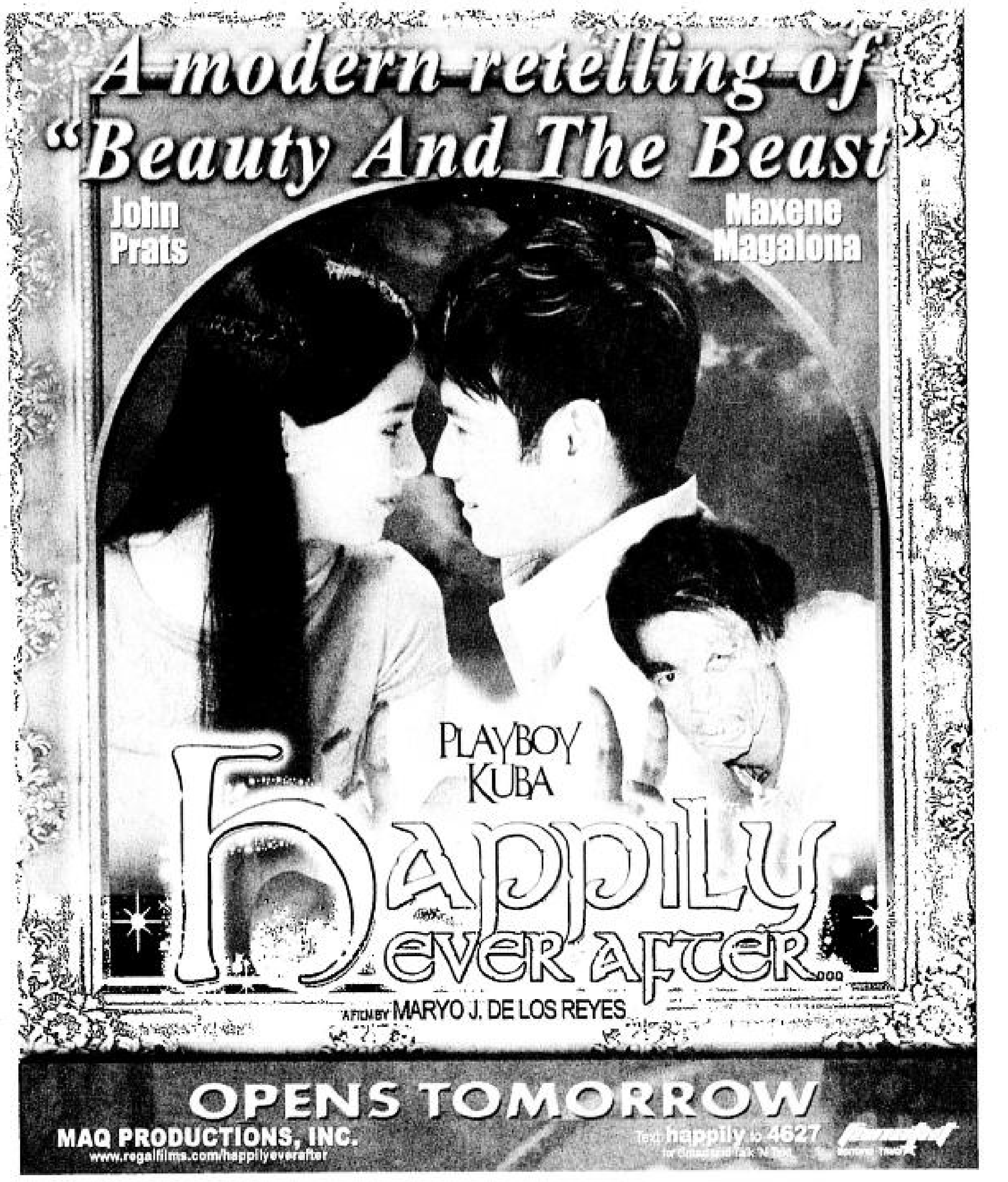
From page A24

last Monday.

If not for the walkout, this year's Famas awards night would have been a seamless show that honored the best performances by top actors and technical staff involved in the production of movies shown in 2004.

The event paid tribute to movie clans—the Revillas, De Leons, Eigenmans, Estradas, Cruzes and Quizons.

To be sure, fans who tuned in to the delayed telecast on ABS-CBN saw nothing of the walkout and other unpleasantness during the live coverage. If not for newspapers accounts such as this one, the incident—first in Famas' history, we were told—would very likely become just another urban legend.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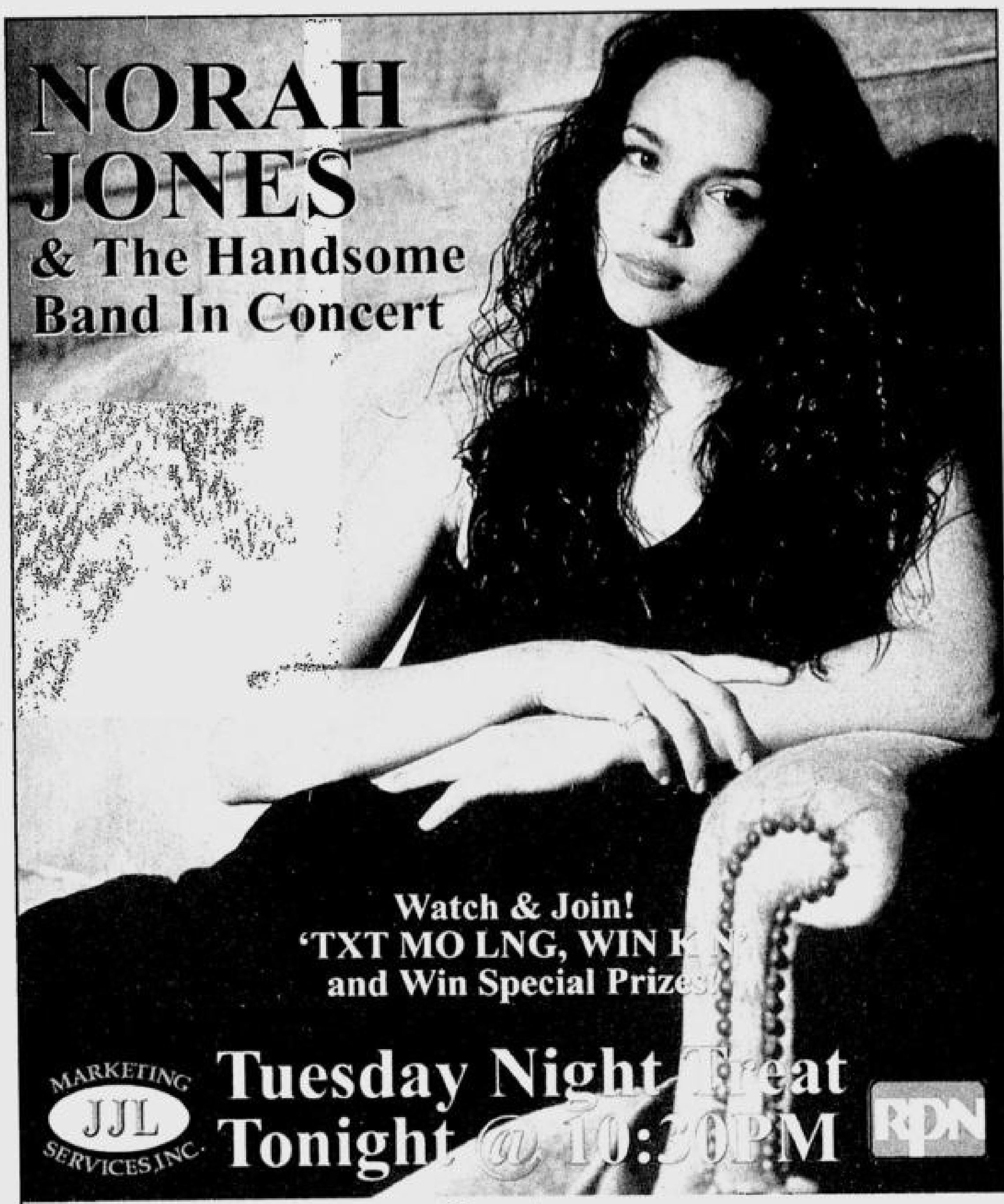

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

LENSMEN lay down their cameras as sign of protest. RUDY ESPERAS

Walkout!

Press photographers were shooed away during the 53rd Famas Awards night

By Nini Valera

PRESS photographers covering the 53rd Famas Awards night on Sunday at the PICC reception hall walked out after they were repeatedly shooed away by a floor director of the television production crew.

About 20 media people, including INQUIRER photographer Rudy Esperas and this writer, left the venue during the announcement of the Best Supporting Actor winner, Dennis Trillo, for his role in the film "Aishte Imasu 1941." This was about an hour into the ceremonies, which lasted about four hours, including the commercial load for television.

Tess Celestino-Howard of Airtime Marketing, TV block timer for the event, identified the floor director as Alex Magbanua. But she said Magbanua was only asking the photographers to stay in one place and not move around so they would not obstruct the TV cameras.

The Famas ceremonies were seen also on Sunday in a delayed telecast via ABS-CBN's Channel 2.

Sounds like...

Celestino-Howard told INQUIRER Entertainment that Magbanua was only doing his job. "He does have a loud voice, so the photographers probably thought he was screaming at them," she said.

In a phone interview with INQUIRER Entertainment yesterday, Famas president Art Padua condemned the actions of the event organizers, Parsley and Thyme, particularly the shabby treatment of press photographers.

"The photographers were well-behaved," observed Padua, a former journalist. "They just stayed on the middle aisle."

In fact, he said, Parsley and Thyme failed to deliver on most of their promises to the Famas.

Come back

Executives from Parsley and Thyme tried to talk the photographers into going back inside the venue. One of them, identified only as "Attorney Espa," even name-dropped the INQUIRER managing editor to convince INQUIRER photographer Rudy Esperas to return to the venue.

(The managing editor says he does not know any Attorney Espa.—Ed)

But Esperas and this writer had had enough at that point.

Other photographers opted to talk to television reporters about the incident, which was picked up by an early morning news program

WALKOUT!/ A23

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Tuesday, June 28, 2005

LIVE 8 ABC

WORLD'S BIGGEST CONCERT, SATURDAY 10 PM

20 years after the biggest performers in the world gathered to "feed the world" on Live Aid, a monumental concert is set to happen in London, Rome, Paris, Berlin and Philadelphia to call on world leaders at the coming G8 Summit to end poverty globally!

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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Showbiz No. 1	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Opids	TV Patrol World		Meteor Garden Full Edition	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Kampanerang Kuba	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Oh! Feel Young	Bora			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		FIBA (Reruns)				Sentro	Lizzie Mcguire	ABC Action Movies				Big News	The Probe Team Documentaries		ESPN Golf	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Tenjho Tenge	Shaman King	Flame Of Recca	Full House	24 Oras		Darna		Encantadia	Extra Challenge		TBA	Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	The Insider	Tough Enough	7 Days		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Emancipation Mariah Carey		
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Shakey's V-League				Sunstar 9-Ball Challenge			IBC News Tonite	Up Close And Personal	
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Hip Hop Nation	WWE Bottomline		WWE Afterburn		X-Play	Banzai	Mad TV		Trigger Happy TV	Primetime Glick	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Stripperella	Family Guy	Wwe Heat	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX	MYX Firsts	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	My MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX	Star MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Top Of The Pops	Mobile MYX Top Picks	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Good Morning Miami	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	JKX	Simple Life	One Tree Hill		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Cinema One		Joey Eddie And Lito				Gumapang Ka Sa Lusak				Luv Text				Enteng and Mokong				Wooly Booly 2	
Studio 23								Get Backers	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	The Rebel Billionaire	Angel		Smallville		News Central	Oprah		The Man's Room
AXN		CSI: Miami		CSI: Miami		Totally Outrageous		The Associates		Alias (Season III)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 6		AXN Shakedown	
Star World	Frasier	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Charmed		Pamela Anderson: Laid Bare		Mad Match		Friends	Charmed
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
National Geographic		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster		Interpol Investigates		Wildlife Detectives	Insects From Hell	Wow		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster	
Solar Sports														NBA Greatest Game				NBA Jam	NBA Special
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For, Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		Clean House		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO				The Secret Life Of Zoey (3:50 PM)			Second Sight (5:25 PM)			Rugrats Go Wild (6:55 PM)			The Mambo Kings (8:20 PM)			Carnivale 07: The River/Carnivale 08: Lonnigan, Texas (10:50PM)	Carnivale 09: Insomnia (11:45PM)		
Star Movies	Igby Goes Down (2:20 PM)			Garage Days			Zolar (5:45 PM)				Joe Dirt (7:25 PM)			The Parent Trap				Seabiscuit (11:10PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show		Static Shock	Codename Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers	Zoids Fuzors	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	Codename Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers
ESPN		U.S. Open Golf C'ship Pinehurst, NC USA								U.S. Open Golf Championship		Sportscenter Asia	World Snooker Tour China Open						Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Land Before Time IV: Journey Through The Mists			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Dinosaur Island	
Cinemax			Eight Legged Freaks (3:45 PM)				Owning Mahowny			Silent Rage (7:15 PM)				The Core			Missing (10:35PM)	Relentless (11:15PM)	
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Just Cause		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Just Cause		Mord Docteur Ray					Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye
Discovery Channel		Rameses: Wrath Of God Or Man?				Polar Bear Battlefields		Wild Weather		Rides		Human Discovery		Wild Discovery		The Dangerman Adventures w/ Geoff Mackley		Science Mysteries	
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Get Spotted		TRL		Ask Mayonnaise	MTV Dives		Carmen & Dave	Room Raiders	High School Stories	I Want A Famous Face	On Board at MTV	Whatever Things	VH1- Video Collection	
Sports Plus				Allianz C'ship Highlights		Get A Grip On Golf	Inside the PGA	Dodge/Save Mart 500 Highlights		FMX		French Open '05 Finals				World's Greatest Auto Shows		Nopi Tunerversion	BD 13 South Beach

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Tan seen to match highest bid for PNB

By Michelle V. Remo

TAIPAN Lucio Tan has expressed his intention to acquire majority control of Philippine National Bank, which the government is privatizing in September this year.

The Department of Finance, which has embarked on an aggressive privatization program for government assets, yesterday announced that the Lucio Tan group had given notice that it would exercise its right of first offer with regard the PNB sale.

By exercising its right of first offer, the Tan group can match the highest bid from among the prospective buyers of the PNB shares to be privatized.

The government and the Tan camp each hold a 45-percent stake in PNB. The two had agreed to sell to the private sector 67 percent of their combined 90-percent shareholdings. The remaining 10 percent of PNB is publicly held.

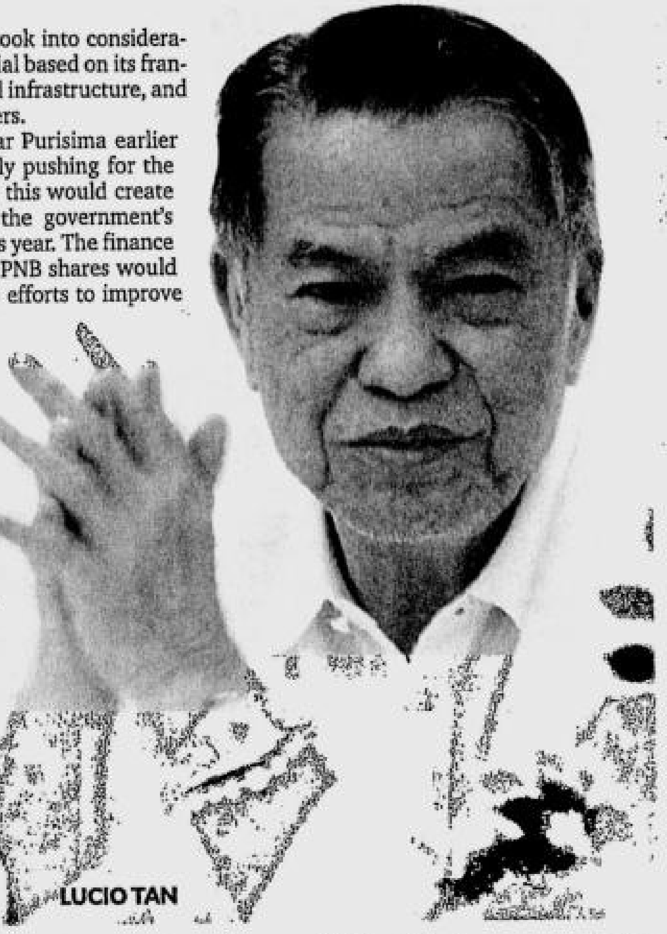
The 67 percent is made up of the 140.8 million preferred shares of held by Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., 45 million shares under the name of the national government, and 186 million shares of the Lucio Tan group.

The announcement of the Lucio Tan group of its intention to exercise its right of first offer followed the setting of the floor price for the PNB sale.

The board of directors of PDIC and the Privatization Council have set the floor price at P43 a share upon recommendation by ING Bank NV, the government's financial adviser for the PNB privatization. At this price, the 67-percent stake would be worth at least P16 billion.

PDIC and the Privatization Council, of which the DOF is a member, said the determination of the floor price took into consideration PNB's earning potential based on its franchise, branch network and infrastructure, and market share, among others.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima earlier said the DOF was strongly pushing for the sale of the PNB shares as this would create enough momentum for the government's privatization program this year. The finance chief said the sale of the PNB shares would help in the government's efforts to improve its fiscal position.


LUCIO TAN

He said the government was bullish about successfully selling the PNB shares, especially since the bank had already returned to profitability. Last year, PNB posted a net income of P168 million, reversing the previous year's net loss of P1.5 billion.

For 2005, PNB said it expected a net profit of P604 million after its generated a net income of P151 million in the first quarter.

"We are confident we will be able to maintain the pace we achieved in the first quarter due to various factors, such as the resolution of our NPL (non-performing loans)," PNB president Omar Byron T. Mie was earlier quoted as saying.

Purisima said the government was targeting to sell the PNB shares on or before September, when the shareholders' agreement between the government and the Lucio Tan group expires. The shareholders' agreement provides for the joint sale of the two parties' holdings in PNB.

BAD NEWS FOR PESO

Economic gains dwarfed by political pains

AT THE START of the year it seemed things were finally looking up for the peso.

Helped by an improving fiscal outlook and strong inflows from overseas workers, the currency racked up gains of more than 4 percent against the dollar in the first three months of the year.

But the peso, it seems, just can't win. A better outlook for the economy has been dwarfed by a political crisis and that means the peso is likely to be stuck below highs seen in March for at least the next two to three months.

President Macapagal-Arroyo faces allegations of electoral fraud and family members are alleged to have received illegal gambling payoffs.

Analysts say that while the government is unlikely to collapse, political strife is unlikely to go away any time soon either and this will prevent the peso benefiting from further fiscal improvements.

"Peso weakness is almost exclusively due to the political crisis," said Ray Farris, director of Asian forex strategy at Credit Suisse First Boston in Singapore.

"If the political crisis resolves itself quickly in the form of a stable government, then an improving current account balance and improving fiscal balance argue for a return to pre-political crisis levels in dollar/peso."

Tax reforms have helped improve the fiscal situation and the government expects its budget deficit to shrink to 3.4 percent of gross domestic product this year from 3.9 percent last year.

Peso woes

The peso, which has shed some 50 percent in the last eight years even as other Asian currencies strengthened, hit a five-month low of 55.93 a dol lar last week.

It has lost more than 3 percent since early May and with political uncertainty lingering,

ECONOMIC/B4

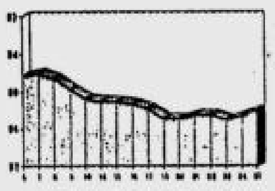
WHAT'S INSIDE

MR. BEARBULL /B3
Gov't agencies help food firms eat into US mart /B4
Neighborly take on waste management /B8

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 55.51 = $1
As of 5 p.m., June 27, 2005

¥ 109.22 = $1
As of 5 p.m., June 27, 2005

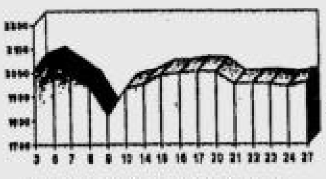
GOLD: $442.90-443.40
per ounce Hong Kong, June 24, 2005

STOCK MARKET

June 27, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.826173166	1.000000	55.7310
Japan	Yen	0.007578	0.009173	0.5112
United Kingdom	Pound	1.507601	1.824800	101.6979
Hongkong	Dollar	0.106303	0.128669	7.1709
Switzerland	Franc	0.648743	0.785238	43.7621
Canada	Dollar	0.670269	0.811293	45.2142
Singapore	Dollar	0.493473	0.597300	33.2881
Australia	Dollar	0.634395	0.767872	42.7943
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.191557	2.652661	147.8355
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220313	0.266667	14.8616
Brunei	Dollar	0.492004	0.595522	33.1890
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000104	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.020112	0.024343	1.3567
UAE	Dirham	0.22495	0.272279	15.1744
Euro	Euro	1	1.210400	67.4568
ArgentinaPeso	0.287115	0.347524	19.3679	
Brazil	REAL	0.346913	0.419903	23.4016
Denmark	Kroner	0.134239	0.162483	9.0553
India	Rupee	0.019023	0.023026	1.2833
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217443	0.263193	14.6680
Mexico	New Peso	0.076804	0.092963	5.1809
New Zealand	Dollar	0.582222	0.704722	39.2749
Norway	Kroner	0.125694	0.152140	8.4789
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013843	0.016756	0.9338
South Africa	Rand	0.123296	0.149238	8.3172
Korea	Won	0.000815	0.000987	0.0550
Sweden	Kroner	0.106499	0.128906	7.1841
Syria	Pound	0.015915	0.019264	1.0736
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026385	0.031936	1.7798
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000385	0.000466	0.0260

Shares close 0.84% higher

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARE prices closed 0.84 percent higher yesterday on selective interest in the blue-chips after last week's sharp falls, dealers said.

While the market was relieved that promised massive demonstrations against President Gloria Arroyo failed to materialize over the weekend, the tone was still cautious ahead of the President's scheduled television address later yesterday, thay said.

At the same time, record oil prices which show no sign of pulling back were a disincentive to trade.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 16.29 points to 1,963.50 after trading between 1,943.28 and 1,965.19. Turnover was thin at 125 million shares worth P605 million.AFP

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–Laura DiDio, The Yankee Group, April 2004
"Free Software", Unix, and Windows TCO Comparison

The Yankee Group, a global research and consulting firm, concluded that a significant switch to "free software" from Windows or Unix could cost three to four times as much without delivering tangibly better performance or business value. These findings are based on a non-sponsored worldwide survey of 1,000 IT administrators and C-level executives in midsized and large enterprises.

To get the full study, visit **microsoft.com/getthefacts**

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END-JUNE

Bayantel to settle ₱158M in debts

By Clarissa S. Batino

BAYAN Telecommunications Inc., the phone company of the Lopez group, will settle P158 million in interest and a portion of its principal debt to creditors this week, the company's chief finance officer said.

The company will use internal funds to pay P135 million in quarterly interest and P23.3 million in principal scheduled every semester.

This is the first time the company would be paying a portion of its $325 million in principal debts. Bayantel is a subsidiary of Benpres Holdings Corp. and the parent firm had said that the phone company was for sale.

Salvador Tirona, chief finance officer of Bayantel, said the company's second-quarter performance mirrored that of the first quarter.

"Our second quarter performance remains on track with our targets this year. So far, we are showing good results in May," he said in an interview. The company is targeting P6 billion in sales this year.

The second quarter was "almost the same as the first quarter" when net revenues reached P1.4 billion and earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization or Ebitda stood at P529 million.

Bayantel's first quarter revenue was 7 percent higher and Ebitda was up 15 percent from a year ago.

Mark Securities plans seat reopening

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

LOCAL broker Mark Securities has expressed its plan to reactivate its brokerage seat, the second to do so after JP Morgan Securities Philippines Inc., PSE president Francis Lim said.

Mark Securities of stockbroker Mark Dayrit also wrote to the PSE seeking assistance to convince the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) to reduce the paid-up capital imposed on brokers.

Sources told the INQUIRER that the PSE had asked the SEC to reduce the minimum paid-up capital on brokers to P15 million from the present P100 million.

Dayrit, who is chair and president of Mark Securities, told the PSE that the paid-up capital should be reduced to P40 million.

"I went on voluntary suspension in September 2002. To renew my broker-dealer license, the SEC is requiring P100 million. I am appealing that. The timing is right. I think the market will have better volumes next year and the later part of this year once these political problems clear up. There are new initial public offerings and new listings coming out. I cannot avail myself of that if I am a non-operational broker," Dayrit said.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 27, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	18,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	30.5	31.5	30.5	31	457,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49	49.5	48.5	49.5	914,200
China Banking Corp.	780	780	780	780	100
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	200,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	50	50.5	48	49.5	80,500
International Exch. Bank	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	30,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30	30.5	29.5	29.5	522,300
Philippine National Bank	42.5	42.5	42	42	35,000
Security Bank Corp.	25	25	25	25	167,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	23,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	144	144	141	141	17,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1850	1870	1850	1860	990
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11.25	11.25	11	11.25	246,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	1,165,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	800	805	800	800	21,580
Ipeople Inc.	3.95	4.05	3.9	4.05	142,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3	3	682,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1635	1635	1630	1635	58,690
Ivantage Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	20,000
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.017	0.016	0.017	5,300,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	15	15	2,400
Manila Electric Co. B	22.75	22.75	22.5	22.5	522,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	5,553,000
Petron Corp.	3	3.05	3	3.05	556,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	15,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.1	22,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.4	7.6	7.4	7.6	2,576,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	100,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	30,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	1,110,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.25	3.25	174,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31	31	31	500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	29	28.5	29	74,600
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	47,000
San Miguel Corp. B	92.5	94.5	92.5	94.5	119,500
Universal Robina Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	49,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	327.5	330	327.5	330	115,870
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.48	500,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	302,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	2,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.96	1.98	1.96	1.96	420,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	11	11.5	10	11.5	85,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.145	180,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.04	1.06	4,632,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	500,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26	1,170,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.6	2.5	2.6	2,246,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	7.5	7.5	7.2	7.3	1,024,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	46	47	46	47	82,400
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	400,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.1	230,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	666,000
Medco Holdings	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	150,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.44	1.4	1.42	326,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	6,070,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.96	0.96	420,000
SM Investments Corp.	252.5	255	252.5	255	448,550
South China Resources Inc.	0.62	0.62	0.6	0.6	800,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	90,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.21	1,150,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Macondray Plastics Inc.	2	2	2	2	5,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.06	1.1	1.06	1.08	9,195,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	8.4	8.5	6	8.5	4,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	890,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	13,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	287,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series AA	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	4,600
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	5,000
Far Eastern University	500	500	500	500	200
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8	8.5	8	8.4	10,807,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.91	130,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	700,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.145	30,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0.38	0.36	0.38	1,910,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.46	1.48	1.44	1.48	2,748,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.22	2.22	2.2	2.2	170,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.22	0.22	0.2	0.2	50,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.33	0.5	0.33	0.5	230,000
Primex Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	50,000
SM Development Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	70,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.6	7.8	7.6	7.8	251,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	71,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	2,860,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.36	5,020,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	3,300,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	30,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.006	4,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.91	510,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.02	2,000,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28	28.5	28	28	193,500
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.26	0.26	0.24	0.24	600,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	150,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.55	2.55	51,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	100,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	2,466,890	89,244,920.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	53,821,090	405,110,830.00
PRO	17,156,000	98,308,540.00
Mining	49,454,500	12,005,710.00
OIL	2,301,000	209,050.00
GRAND TOTALS :	125,199,480	604,879,050.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	558.68	DOWN 1.48
Comm'l & Ind'l	3,085.98	UP 11.63
PRO	750.52	UP 24.83
Mining	2,850.68	DOWN 58.45
OIL	2.63	DOWN 0.04
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	1,191.31	UP 5.92
Composite	1,963.50	UP 16.29

NO. OF ADVANCES: 27; NO. OF DECLINES: 31; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 50; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 108; NO. OF TRADES: 2,219

[illegible]

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank received approval from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas for its cash dividend of P0.65 per common share. Stockholders of record as of July 11 will be entitled to receive the subject cash dividend. July 29 is the day of payment.

***

SQL* Wizard Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 12, 3 p.m., at Unit 1102, 11/F 88 Corporate Center, Sedeno cor. Valero Sts., Salcedo Vill., Makati City. The record date is July 8.

***

IPEOPLE Inc. elected as directors Ernesto Garcia, Marco Santos, Yvonne Yuchengco, Perry Uy, John Alabastro, Milagros Reyes, Cesar Buenaventura, Renato Valencia and Orlando Vea.

***

IVANTAGE Corp. elected as directors William Chua, Roberto Lorayes, Willy Ocier, Antonio Samson, Wilson Sy, Gregorio Yu, Ignacio Gimenez, Violeta Luym, Joseph Ong, Adolfo Suzara and Valentino Sy. It reappointed Sycip, Gorres, Velayo & Co. as external auditor.

***

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co.'s first vice president Miguela Villanueva disposed of 1,500 shares for P1,620 per share on June 24, leaving her with no beneficially owned share.

***

SM Development Corp. acquired 36,250,000 additional shares of SM Synergy Properties Holdings Corp. for P13,247,645. SM Development Corp.'s ownership of the latter company increased from 85.5 percent to 100 percent. ***Compiled by Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research***

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The Philippine Customer Market Scenario:
How to Generate Additional Revenues

MARKETING TO THE BOTTOM OF THE PYRAMID
August 15 - 17, 2005

What is the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP)?
In the Philippines, the BOP comprises 60 million or 73 percent of the population, primarily minimum wage earners. The BOP market segment is still a large untapped customer base even though individuals have limited purchasing power. The key to success is to fit the products to the needs of the BOP market.

Why go to the Bottom of the Pyramid?
- In Bangladesh, Graamen Telecom operates 39,000 village phones (VP) serving 50 million villagers in rural areas and earns US$21 in service charge and US$41 in phone bills per VP per month
- In Brazil, Casas Bahia makes furniture and home appliances affordable to the BOP market which accounts for 70 percent of its customers and 90 percent of its total sales volume.
- In the Philippines, the mobile phone industry which generated Php89 billion gross revenues in 2004, serves 30 million phone subscribers, 97 percent of whom are prepaid subscribers, mostly coming from the CDE Classes.

Who Should Attend?
CEO, COO and Senior Officers who are involved in business development, marketing and sales, or corporate and strategic planning officers of organizations or businesses dealing with Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Course Outline
- Understanding the BOP Customer
- Finding Opportunities from the Masses
- Determining the Best Bottom Line for the Bottom Market
- Retooling Your Organization to Serve the Bottom Market
- Making Your Customers Your Business Partners
- Formulating Strategic Applications

For inquiries and reservation call:
Ms. Lorna Balina | Ms. Zalda Villanueva
Tel +632 892-4011 to 25 ext. 356, 376, 369 | Telefax +632 813-3302
Email ace@mail.aim.edu.ph | mvillanueva@mail.aim.edu.ph | lbalina@mail.aim.edu.ph

AIM ASIAN CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Eugenio Lopez Foundation Bldg., Joseph R. McMicking Campus
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EQUIS ACCREDITED

Market rally as few people rally

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I HAVE been using the same air conditioner for 10 years and until recently, I have had no trouble with it as I have it serviced regularly. However, a month ago, when I switched it on, steam poured out of the slats. I called maintenance and they fixed it. A week ago, hot water gushed out of the top. I immediately called the Department of Energy and told them that I had found a new source of geothermal energy but they were not interested.

Yesterday, I turned it on and molten lava ran out. With quick presence of mind, I inserted a large piece of asbestos to prevent a fire. I did asbestos I could under the circumstances. I then telephoned the shop and gave the sales girl who failed to get into a call center because of her poor English, the following message:

"Send a 1 horse-power Carrier air-conditioner, P15,000."

Two hours later, I was astonished to see a calesa outside my house filled with 1,000 bottles of Sunsilk. I called the manager and asked him what he was doing.

"I got an order to send you one horse carrying P15,000 of hair conditioner. I thought it was odd but then you are an odd person." We sorted it out amicably and the air-con duly arrived. I thought it would be too heavy for me to carry but it was as light as a FEDDER.

A good friend, who I will simply refer to as Golfinger, took me to a beautiful French restaurant called the Chateu Briand, in which he has a steak. They have a dress code, but frankly I look silly in a dress so I skirted round the issue and wore a barong and football boots. We started with fishy soup made famous in Marseille. It is called Fishysoisse. We then ordered oysters but I pulled a mussel.

For the main course, the maitre d' recommended the *sole meuniere*. I discovered later that he was the sole proprietor. Not being a wine expert, I asked which wine went with sole and he replied Chateu la feet. For dessert, we shared a crepe Suzette, but I am sure she was under age. If you have difficulty understanding these jokes, kindly ring the French Embassy.

* * *

I am increasingly having difficulty writing about the stock market because the lawmen, the media, and the government are doing their best to destroy it. So far, they have not succeeded and foreign brokers continued to buy stock everyday. On Thursday, following a report from PLDT that its promo had resulted in an additional 1.4 million subscribers last quarter, they bought P300 million worth of TEL. One local broker sold a large amount so the price remained unchanged. On Friday, foreign brokers bought P86 million, mostly TEL, but the index still fell 8 points due to local selling.

So far, overseas fund mangers have concentrated on the fiscal reforms being implemented now and in 2006 and ignored the political tension, demonstrations, calls for impeachment and threat of coup d' etat. But if this is going to continue week in, week out, it must inevitably erode confidence. The government has just had to cancel a roadshow extolling the virtues of investing in the Philippines and offering $850 million worth of bonds.

If the situation cannot be resolved and this state of destabilization is allowed to continue, there will come a point at which overseas fund managers will cry "enough." If they start selling the stocks that they have bought, and bearing in mind that local institutions and investors have been net sellers for the past two months, the market could conceivably disintegrate.

Hopefully, common sense will prevail, compromises will be made, rightly or wrongly, in the best interest of the nation. Time is the enemy and some solution must be found quickly. After all, there are a number of other attractive Asian markets in which they can invest, which are more stable politically. Tonight's Sona address at 7 p.m. by the President will be of paramount importance.

The main event this week was that crude oil prices briefly touched $60 a barrel, an all-time high and about twice the price a year ago. The reason for the rise is the voracious appetite of China to sustain its growth rate of 9 percent. India, with its population of one billion, is also growing and with the summer season in the West fast approaching, the US will be requiring more oil for touring and running air-conditioners.

Although Opec is producing an additional 500,000 barrels a day, this oil is very heavy and needs refining. America and the rest of the world have not anticipated the rise in demand so no refineries have been built for years. So even if the extra crude is available, it may not be of immediate use. I foresee the $60 level being broken shortly and the new range increased to $50-$60 a barrel.

If this happens, it must cause a global slowdown with Japan as the hardest hit and the Philippines not far behind. At the end of the last week, the DOW fell 289 points in two days and most European and Asian markets followed the downtrend. Solar power, fuel cells and cold fusion have not come to the rescue, and I expect America to concentrate on nuclear power plants again. A major problem is how to dispose of the fission chips.

The bid of $18.5 billion by Chinese oil giant CNOOC for UNOCAL is really going to cause a furor. It is about $2 a share higher than CHEVRON, but I think the US government will block it on grounds of national security. It is all right for them to buy property or movie studios, as the Japanese did years ago at inflated prices, but for the Chinese to own an oil company in the middle of an acute shortage must surely be against the national interest.

China has a vast trade surplus and is looking to diversify away from US treasury bonds, but if they do so, interest rates in the US could rise sharply, equivalent to the FEDERAL RESERVE hiking the rate to 5 percent or more. This would bring down grossly inflated house prices on which many Americans have taken out second and third mortgages. Unable to pay the increased interest rates, they would have to sell their stocks thereby precipitating a sharp fall in the stock market. The US government has plenty to worry about if they impose sanctions on China's exports.

Alan Greenspan knows this and is trying to prevent any further deterioration in U.S.-SINO relations. He has stated bluntly that even if China revalued the yuan, other low labor-cost countries would fill any shortfall. He and Treasurer John Snow will be meeting with the Chinese minister of trade at the G8 next month. He hopes to convince China to unpeg the yuan, not for America's sake but to prevent an excess of liquidity in their system, which will lead to inflation. Chair Greenspan is a brilliant economist and when he retires next February at 79, his wisdom will be sorely missed.

mrbearbull@hotmail.com

Gov't rejects bids for 1-year T-bills

By Michelle V. Remo

FOR THE THIRD straight auction, the government yesterday rejected all bids for the 364-day treasury bills as banks, bothered by the lingering political uncertainty, sought risk premiums that the government could not afford.

Had the government accepted the bids for the one-year securities, the rate could have risen to 8.053 percent from only 7.851 percent three weeks ago, when bids for the debt paper were last accepted.

Nevertheless, the bellwether 91-day and the 182-day bills fetched rates that were almost unchanged from the previous week's. The rate of the three-month government securities stood one-basis point higher at 5.893 percent, while that for the six-month debt paper inched up by 0.4 basis point to 6.931 percent. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

"Clearly, the market showed that their interest is only on the three- and six-month T-bills. They are the only one that got high volume of tenders," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing after yesterday's auction.

Bids for the 91-day bills reached P3.31 billion, while tenders for the 182-day paper stood at P3.42 billion, making the two government securities over-subscribed. The government's debt offering was P2 billion for each maturity.

Cruz described the movement of the rate for the 91- and 182-day bills as "sideways," explaining that the virtually unchanged rates for the two government securities were a result of the political uncertainties on one hand, and very high market liquidity on the other.

He admitted that if not for the high level of market liquidity, interest rates would have gone much higher as political jitters continue to weigh the market down.

Cruz said banks did not want to place their money in one-year bills and were only willing to invest in shorter-term government securities, being uncertain of how political events would affect the fiscal sector in the long run.

The scandals that have rocked the Arroyo administration put an end to the consecutive weeks of declining interest rates for short-term government securities.

Last June 6, the last auction day when interest rates recorded a drop, the 91-day rate fell by 7.6 basis points to 5.691 percent. The 182- and 364-day yields eased by 3.3 basis points to 6.784 percent, and by 8.3 basis points to 7.851 percent, respectively.

Analysts said the consecutive weeks of interest rate decline until June 6 were an indication the market acknowledged the positive developments in the fiscal sector. However, controversies hounding the administration, such as allegations that the Arroyo family was involved in jueteng payoffs and that the President cheated in last year's elections, adversely affected investor sentiment.

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Department of Finance
BUREAU OF CUSTOMS
Customs District XIII
Port of Subic
Olongapo City

NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2601 to 2610 of the TCCP, as amended, and CMO 18-2003 dated 25 July 2003, there will be a Public Auction Sale to be conducted by this port on July 5, 2005 at 2:30 PM at Building 303, Customs Clearance Area, Kalaklan Gate, Port of Subic, of about fifty-two (52) lots hereunder described. Said articles shall be available for viewing on June 30 and July 1, 2005. For further inquiry/particulars, please call the office of the District Collector at tel. no. (047) 252-3534 or at the Office of the Auction and Cargo Disposal Unit at tel. no. (047) 252-4696.

- Thirty (30) lots of thirty (30) units used motor vehicles of various types and models with Right-Hand Drive (RHD) - mostly dilapidated, rusty and some with missing parts.
- Twenty (20) lots of twenty (20) units used motor vehicles of various types and models with Left-Hand Drive (LHD) - some are dilapidated, with missing parts and rusty.
- One (1) lot plastic wares (Melawares).
- One (1) lot vehicle replacement parts.

Note:

* Conversion of bidded RHD motor vehicle may be made inside the Freeport Zone, otherwise, the provisions of CAO No. 4-2003 will be applied.

* The winning bidder shall be required to pay 50% of the bid price either in cash and/or Manager's Check immediately and the balance of 50% shall be made within the next business day.

* Public Auction shall be accordance with CMO No. 5-2003. Basic Guidelines shall be furnished to the prospective bidders during the viewing days.

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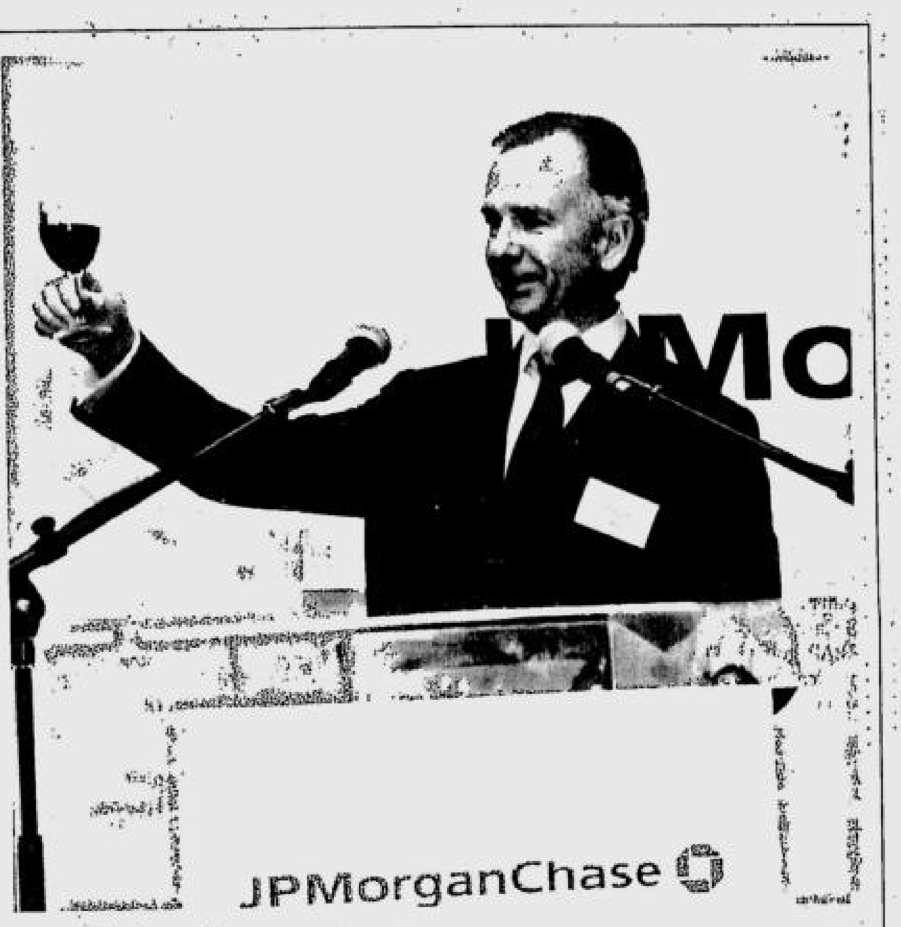

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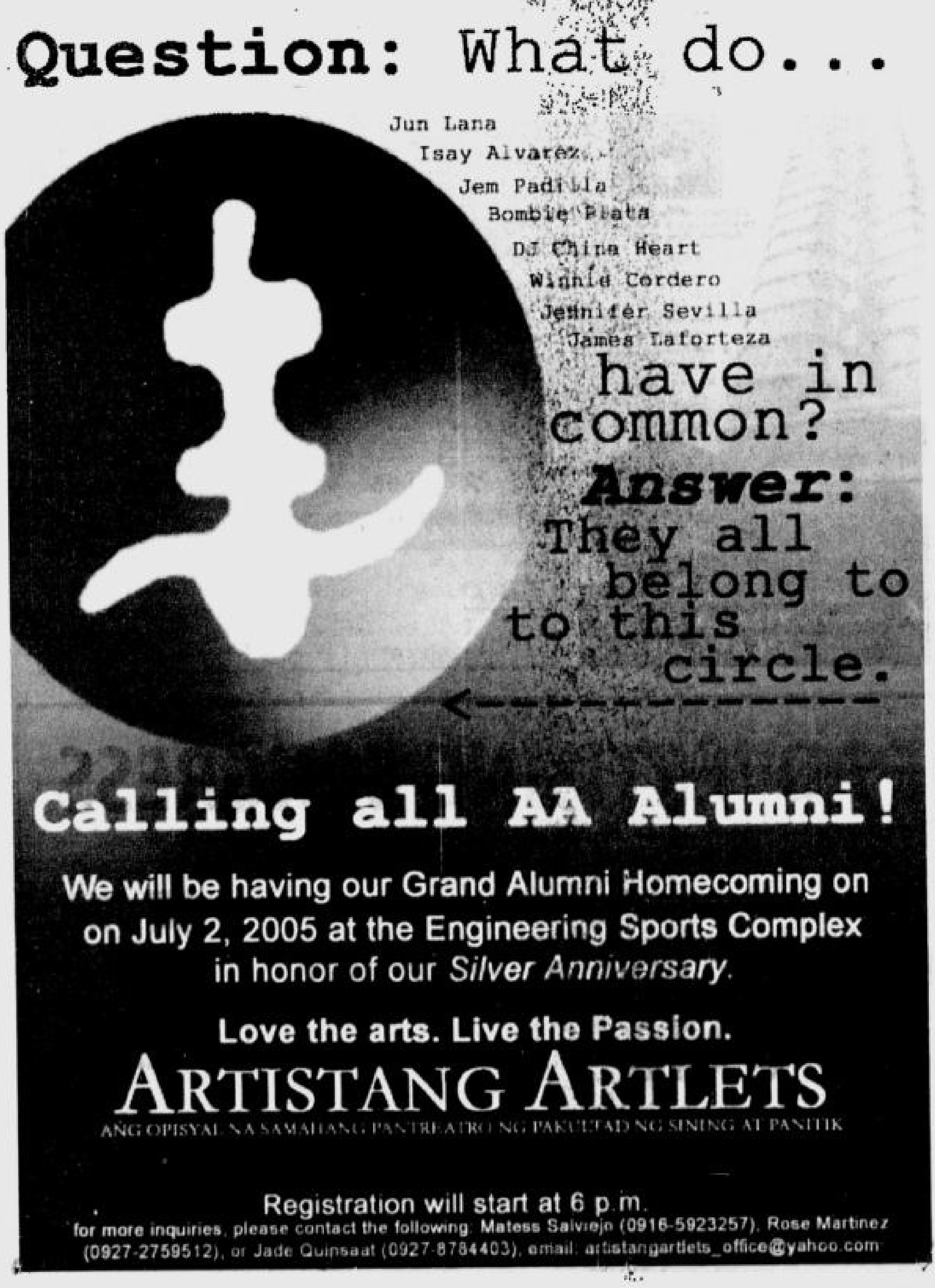
It would have been much better had the witnesses explained to the Senate how jueteng is being rigged nowadays. This would have been a basis for legislation.

Better still, the archbishop should have heard the witnesses in the secrecy of the confessional, granted them absolution, and sent them off to sin no more.

Fortunately, these voluble prelates represent a small percent of the 121 members of the bishops' conference. Nonetheless, may the saints preserve and protect us from these meddlesome bishops.



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Forex gains boost MIAA Q1 profit

By Clarissa S. Batino

A STRONG peso helped boost the profits of the Manila International Airport Authority to P314 million in the first quarter, up 44 percent or P96 million from the same period in 2004.

The exchange rate averaged at P55.35 in the first quarter against P56 a year ago.

Profits of the operator of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport surpassed its target for the period by 81 percent or by P141 million, despite a slight drop in the number of international flights.

Overseas flights in the first three months were down by 45 while domestic trips went up by 1,479 or by 7.6 percent compared to the same period last year.

Thus, the MIAA collected P27 million less in aeronautical fees.

But collection from terminal fees went up P19 million as the number of departing passengers rose by 35,345 for domestic routes and 98,493 for international flights.

MIAA general manager Alfonso Cusi said the agency realized P88 million in gains on interest income, reduced interest expense and foreign revaluation on loans.

Net profit from operations stood at P291 million, up 8 percent or P20 million against the first three months of 2004.

Gross revenues of P1.1 billion was only 1 percent or P13 million more against a year ago due to the decline in aeronautical and rental fees.

Operating expenses were up 0.5 percent or P3 million to P663 million.

The MIAA admitted that its revenue was 12 percent or P150 million lower than target, while income from operations was 7 percent or P21 million less.

Operating expenses were lower by P11 percent or P86 million against the budget.

Tirso Serrano, consultant to the GM said that the MIAA was putting in place a system that would help the agency improve the monitoring of its performance.

He said a PRA or program review and analysis would require all operating staff and control offices to quantify targets on a quarterly and semester basis for closer review of middle and higher management.

Economic gains dwarfed ...

From page B1

is not expected to stage a significant recovery soon.

Lawmakers are conducting an inquiry into allegations that Ms Arroyo's camp rigged last year's presidential elections.

A Senate hearing has also heard allegations that Ms Arroyo's husband, eldest son and brother-in-law took kickbacks from illegal gambling.

Nothing has been proven against the President or her family, who deny any wrongdoing. The President plans a national address later last night "on an issue of vital concern," her spokesperson said.

DBS economist Euben Paracuelles expects the peso to trade between 55.50 and 56.50 against the dollar in the next quarter.

"It is likely to remain within that range in the next two to three months and the reasons are quite straight forward—it is the political scenario," he said.

"This will blow over but not soon. Investigations are going on in both houses of Congress and these will not be over in the next month or so and that's going to be a drag on the peso."

Oil prices, which have surged above $60 a barrel, add to the peso's woes since the Philippines imports nearly all of its oil and is already struggling with high inflation, which averaged 8.4 percent in January-May.

Still, the peso shouldn't weaken too much against the dollar. Much of the negative news is priced in and the prospect of central bank intervention should provide support, analysts said.

Down but not out

Once political uncertainty fades, the peso's high-yielding currency status could tempt investors back. At 7 percent, the benchmark interest rate in the Philippines is the second highest in Southeast Asia.

Analysts said improvements in the government's finances meant better times were in store for the peso, which should see a recovery towards the end of the year.

Tax measures, such as a value added tax bill signed into law in May, have laid the groundwork for a turnaround in the country's fiscal dynamics, UBS said in a recent research note.

The International Monetary Fund said recently the Philippines could sharply cut its budget deficit this year due to new revenue-raising measures and a drive against tax evaders.

"Compared to this time last year, the improvement in the fiscal balance has been quite marked and this is something we are pointing to as indicative of a better outlook for the peso," said HSBC regional currency strategist Richard Yetsenga. *Reuters*

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Gov't agencies help food firms eat into US mart

By Ronnel W. Domingo

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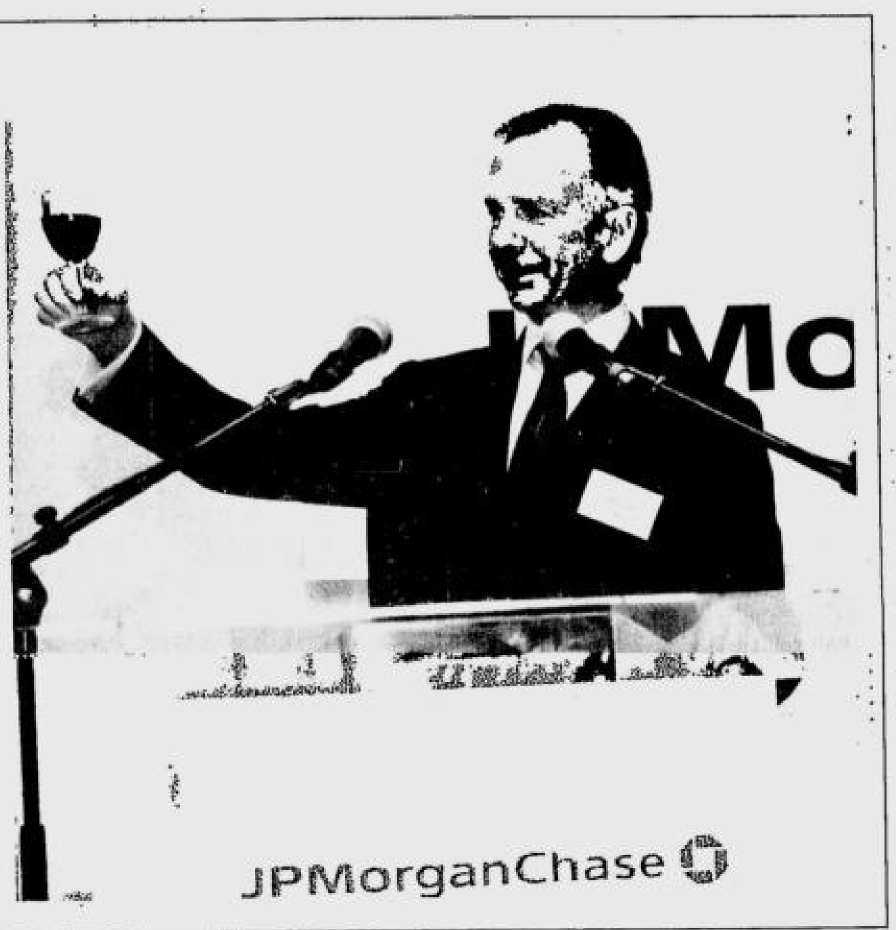

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It would have been much better had the witnesses explained to the Senate how jueteng is being rigged nowadays. This would have been a basis for legislation.

Better still, the archbishop should have heard the witnesses in the secrecy of the confessional, granted them absolution, and sent them off to sin no more.

Fortunately, these voluble prelates represent a small percent of the 121 members of the bishops' conference. Nonetheless, may the saints preserve and protect us from these meddlesome bishops.

Forex gains boost MIAA Q1 profit

By Clarissa S. Batino

A STRONG peso helped boost the profits of the Manila International Airport Authority to P314 million in the first quarter, up 44 percent or P96 million from the same period in 2004.

The exchange rate averaged at P55.35 in the first quarter against P56 a year ago.

Profits of the operator of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport surpassed its target for the period by 81 percent or by P141 million, despite a slight drop in the number of international flights.

Overseas flights in the first three months were down by 45 while domestic trips went up by 1,479 or by 7.6 percent compared to the same period last year.

Thus, the MIAA collected P27 million less in aeronautical fees.

But collection from terminal fees went up P19 million as the number of departing passengers rose by 35,345 for domestic routes and 98,493 for international flights.

MIAA general manager Alfonso Cusi said the agency realized P88 million in gains on interest income, reduced interest expense and foreign revaluation on loans.

Net profit from operations stood at P291 million, up 8 percent or P20 million against the first three months of 2004.

Gross revenues of P1.1 billion was only 1 percent or P13 million more against a year ago due to the decline in aeronautical and rental fees.

Operating expenses were up 0.5 percent or P3 million to P663 million.

The MIAA admitted that its revenue was 12 percent or P150 million lower than target, while income from operations was 7 percent or P21 million less.

Operating expenses were lower by P11 percent or P86 million against the budget.

Tirso Serrano, consultant to the GM said that the MIAA was putting in place a system that would help the agency improve the monitoring of its performance.

He said a PRA or program review and analysis would require all operating staff and control offices to quantify targets on a quarterly and semester basis for closer review of middle and higher management.

Economic gains dwarfed ...

From page B1

is not expected to stage a significant recovery soon.

Lawmakers are conducting an inquiry into allegations that Ms Arroyo's camp rigged last year's presidential elections.

A Senate hearing has also heard allegations that Ms Arroyo's husband, eldest son and brother-in-law took kickbacks from illegal gambling.

Nothing has been proven against the President or her family, who deny any wrongdoing. The President plans a national address later last night "on an issue of vital concern," her spokesperson said.

DBS economist Euben Paracuelles expects the peso to trade between 55.50 and 56.50 against the dollar in the next quarter.

"It is likely to remain within that range in the next two to three months and the reasons are quite straight forward—it is the political scenario," he said.

"This will blow over but not soon. Investigations are going on in both houses of Congress and these will not be over in the next month or so and that's going to be a drag on the peso."

Oil prices, which have surged above $60 a barrel, add to the peso's woes since the Philippines imports nearly all of its oil and is already struggling with high inflation, which averaged 8.4 percent in January-May.

Still, the peso shouldn't weaken too much against the dollar. Much of the negative news is priced in and the prospect of central bank intervention should provide support, analysts said.

Down but not out

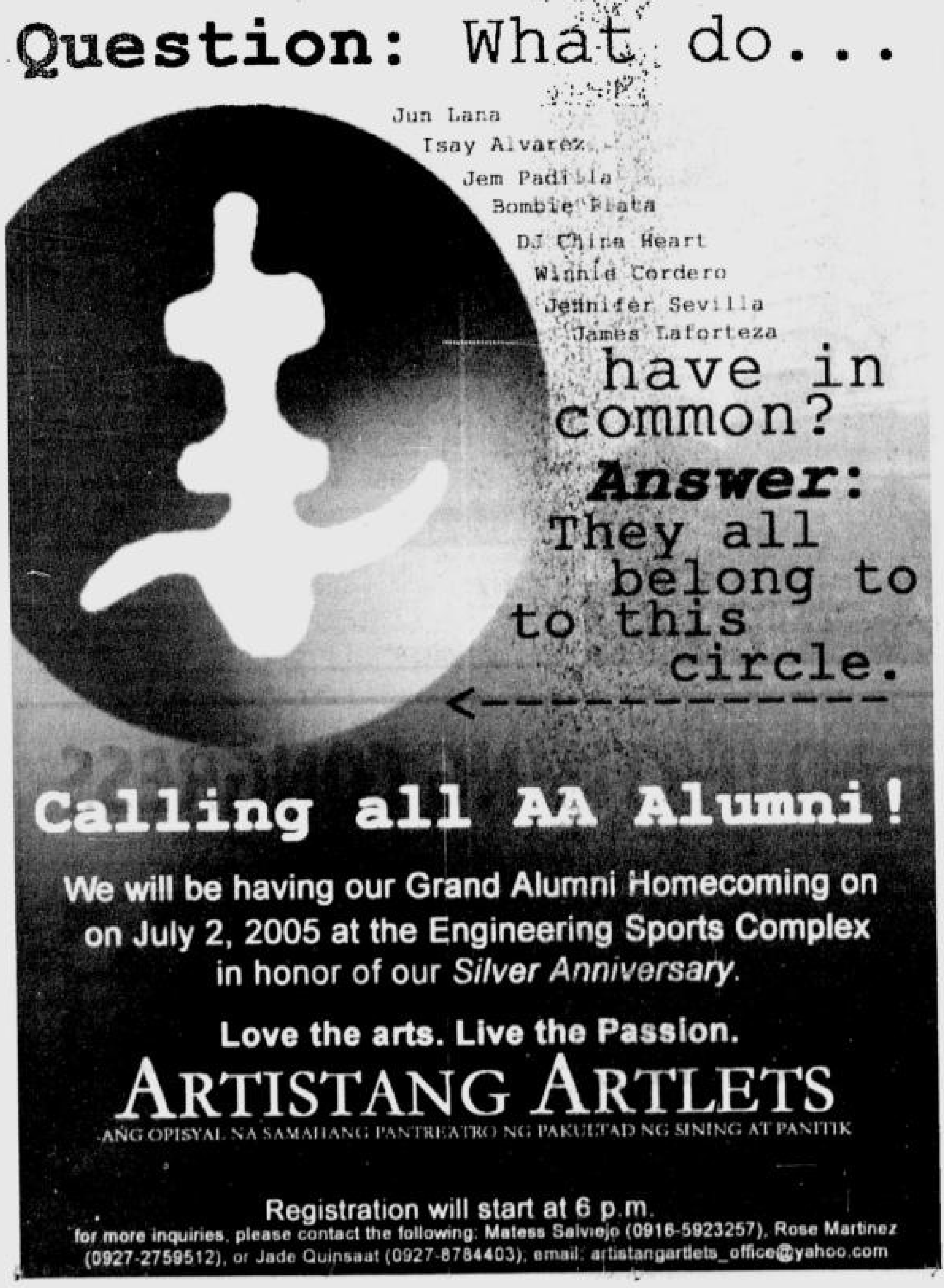
Once political uncertainty fades, the peso's high-yielding currency status could tempt investors back. At 7 percent, the benchmark interest rate in the Philippines is the second highest in Southeast Asia.

Analysts said improvements in the government's finances meant better times were in store for the peso, which should see a recovery towards the end of the year.

Tax measures, such as a value added tax bill signed into law in May, have laid the groundwork for a turnaround in the country's fiscal dynamics, UBS said in a recent research note.

The International Monetary Fund said recently the Philippines could sharply cut its budget deficit this year due to new revenue-raising measures and a drive against tax evaders.

"Compared to this time last year, the improvement in the fiscal balance has been quite marked and this is something we are pointing to as indicative of a better outlook for the peso," said HSBC regional currency strategist Richard Yetsenga. *Reuters*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Editor Aries Espinosa

Globe G-Cash, RBAP launch Text-a-Payment program

IN LINE with its goal of serving as an effective tool for economic empowerment and poverty alleviation, Globe G-Cash recently supported the 52nd Annual National Convention of the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines (RBAP), with the theme "Tooling Up for Effective Rural Banking."

The convention covered the issues and challenges faced by rural banks in their mission of providing effective financial services in the countryside. One of the highlights was the launching of the RBAP Text-a-Payment program, which allows borrowers to make loan payments quickly and easily using G-Cash. Globe also sponsored the RBAP golf tournament and a special musical presentation for the members and guests.

The Text-a-Payment program directly benefits rural clients, particularly Filipinos who rely on small businesses for their income and who obtain capital for these ventures through loans from local banks, cooperatives, and other financial institutions. At the same time, it would reduce collection costs, time, and risk for the rural banks. The project had earlier been successfully piloted in four rural banks located in different areas of the country under the USAID-assisted Microenterprise Access to Banking Services (MABS) program.

At present, nine out of ten microbusiness operators have cellphones, presenting a significant opportunity to broaden the reach of micro-entrepreneurship in the country. RBAP member banks currently provide financial assistance and services to nearly 200,000 microenterprise borrowers across the country. G-Cash, on the other hand, has gained over one million subscribers and facilitated around 2.5 million wireless and cardless financial transactions throughout the nation in the six months since it was launched. The Text-a-Payment system is thus expected to boost the positive impact of RBAP's microfinance program due to the convenience and security of the process, as well as the pervasiveness of text messaging.

During the launch, Globe Telecom president and CEO Gerry Ablaza stressed that the introduction of G-Cash would make microfinance services in rural areas more efficient and viable. Likewise, RBAP president Senen Glorioso hailed the partnership with Globe as a major leap forward, bringing cutting-edge telecommunications technology into microfinance by providing a convenient and secure means of loan amortization.

"Globe remains committed to the mission of poverty alleviation through microfinance," Ablaza affirms. "We believe that the best way to uplift our nation's economy is to strengthen microentrepreneurship in the communities in which we operate, thus helping people lead more productive lives. Globe will continue to expand G-Cash for the benefit of small business owners and all consumers."

FROM left: Globe Telecom chief information officer Rodell Garcia, chief operating advisor Andrew Buay, G-Xchange president Joey Mendoza, MABS chief of party John Owens, RBAP president Senen Glorioso, Globe Telecom president and CEO Gerry Ablaza, and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Deputy Governor Nestor Espenilla Jr.

PDI PHOTO / JOSEPH AGCAOILI

PSBANK KICKS OFF AUTO LOAN CHALLENGE AT GLORIETTA CAR EXHIBIT

PSBank, the Philippines' second largest savings bank in terms of assets, has launched a one-of-a-kind activity that aims to underscore the uniqueness of its Auto Loan product: simplicity. From Monday, June 20 to Tuesday, June 28, PSBank will station an Auto Loan booth at the Glorietta Activity Center during Mitsubishi Expo 2005 car show. The booth will enable mallers and passers-by to test their 'approvability' for an auto loan by filling up a short application form and submitting it at the Auto Loan booth. The challenge: for PSBank to inform the applicant through SMS within three hours whether he or she has been conditionally approved for an Auto Loan. Conditional, meaning that it's subject to submission of formal application and determination of loan amount. PSBank can guarantee the short turn around, thanks to its automated loan application processing system. This innovative system allows PSBank to process loans faster than most other banks in terms of encoding applications and credit evaluation. The PSBank Auto Loan challenge will utilize a simplified application form that was developed exclusively for the one-week Mitsubishi car show. PSBank is calling on all interested car buyers to make the most of the opportunity. Once approved, those who availed of the loan will find that the PSBank Auto Loan offers low interest rates and has flexible payment terms which client can choose anywhere from 12 to 60 months, customized to their needs. And with convenient ways to settle their accounts-via automatic debit arrangement, postdated checks or over-the-counter payments-PSBank Auto Loan is truly made simple for the customer. Outside of the Mitsubishi car exhibit, applicants may still avail of the Auto Loan product at any PSBank branch. They only need to completely fill-out the regular PSBank Auto Loan application form and submit to any PSBank branch nationwide. For more information, please contact the PSBank Auto Loans division at 845-0055, 845-0053 or 885-8208 locals 8682, 8683, 8678, 8325, or visit any PSBank branch nationwide. Clients can also apply for an auto loan via SMS, just type PSBANK AUTO PR <your name>_<your landline no.> then send to 2337 for Globe or (0917)890-2327 for non-Globe users. Visit the PSBank Auto Loan booth at the Glorietta Activity Center now.

Bayer says 'It's time to bite back'

IN THE Philippines where mosquito control technology is available, in recent years, public health authorities spearheaded by the Center for Health Development (CHD-Metro Manila) under the auspices of the Department of Health in cooperation with Bayer Environmental Science, have emphasized disease prevention and mosquito control through community efforts to reduce larval breeding sources.

At the recently culminated Infectious Disease Prevention and Control and Environmental and Occupational Health Clusters Consultative Workshop held April 19 to 20, at Oasis Hotel in Angeles, Pampanga, Bayer Environmental Science Philippines donated two units of Fogging Machines to CHD-Metro Manila.

Here are some things you can do to help fight mosquitoes: empty standing water in old tires, cemetery urns, buckets, plastic covers, toys, or any other container where "wrigglers" and "tumblers" live; empty and change the water in bird baths, fountains, wading pools, rain barrels, and potted plant trays at least once a week if not more often; drain or fill temporary pools with dirt; keep swimming pools treated and circulating and rain gutters unclogged; use mosquito repellents when necessary and follow label direction and precautions closely; use head nets, long sleeves and long pants if you venture into areas with high mosquito populations, such as salt marshes; if there is a mosquito-borne disease warning effect, stay inside during the evening when mosquitoes are most active; make sure window and door screens are "bug tight"; teplace your outdoor lights with yellow "bug lights"; fill tree holes with cement or sand and create a shallow slit down to drain rainwater; coconut shells and the likes such as cocoa, peanuts should be disposed of properly or turned upside down to prevent exposure and accumulation of rainwater; secure personal protection by sleeping under mosquito net especially for infants and small children even during daytime; canoes and small fishing boats should be emptied of water and turned upside down when not in use; level or fill in tops of bamboo fences to prevent accumulation of water and breeding sites; leaf axils of various plant species often contain rainwater, water should be removed or treated with proper larvicides to prevent Aedes breeding like salt and Temephos; ornamental plant containers like vases, pots, saucers should be cleaned at least once a week, inner surface should be scrubbed, water retained in pot saucers should be treated with salt to kill larvae; clean roof gutter before the onset of rainy season to prevent clogging which could result to accumulation of water; clean water storage containers and scrub its walls at least once a week; cover containers used in collecting rainwater with cloth or screen netting; tighten lid covers of water containers to deny the vector of breeding sites; discard tins and other rubbish by burying.

If crisis escalates, contact your local mosquito control district or health department. Neighborhoods are occasionally sprayed or fogged to prevent disease and nuisance caused by large mosquito numbers. If you have any questions about mosquitoes and their control, call Center for Health Development - Metro Manila at these numbers : 535-4521 and 718-3097.

MOTHER'S DAY AT AYALA WESTGROVE HEIGHTS

Ayala Westgrove Heights recently hosted a successful post-Mother's Day celebration for current and future residents of the premier subdivision. Mothers were treated to different goodies like free spa treatments, beauty products, bouquets of roses and a sumptuous lunch with their families. The event, held at the Kidsgrove Clubhouse was sponsored by French skin care expert Institute Clarins. Ayala Westgrove Heights, the residential development touted as 'The Next Big Thing after Ayala Alabang', will be hosting other activities at the hills and groves. For further information about the prime subidivision and future events for the family, call 728-7000, log on to www.ayalaland.com.ph or email ayala-sales@ayalaland.com.ph.

SENATOR MAR ROXAS GRACES HOGS SUMMIT

Senator Manuel Roxas II picks a pack of Bibbol Hotdog at the opening ceremonies of hogs summit organized by the National Federation of Hog Farmers which was held in Olongapo City. To his left is NFHF chair Gabriel Uy. The hog raisers and the Philippine Association of Meat Processors Inc (Pampi) forged an agreement to come up with sustainable programs to reduce prices of meat products.

BITS & Clips

PAPRC seminar set

A SEMINAR on "Maximizing Returns on Public Relations" will be conducted by the Philippine Association of Public Relations Counselors Inc on June 30 (Thursday) and July 1 (Friday), at the Dusit Hotel Nikko in Makati City from 1 to 5 p.m. PAPRC is an organization of veteran public relations professionals in the private and the public sectors. The seminar has been designed to help senior managers of organizations, whether engaged in manufacturing of goods of the delivery of services, get the most from the management of public relations to better achieve their corporate objectives. Participants in the seminar will be entitled to receive for free a book on public relations, a copy of the Philippine Journal of Public Relations. For more information, contact: 896-7983 or telefax 897-6926.

McDonald's rockin' combo offers dream CDs

HEY dudes, want something to really rock your world? Starting June 15 till July 15, just drop by at any of the 243 McDonald's nationwide and buy a Big Mac Meal or any Value Meal and get your all-original chartbuster songs in CDs compiled especially for McDonald's by Sony. Get into the beat and collect these three (3) CD favorites - best female hits, best male hits and best loved hits featuring selections from Destiny's Child, Alicia Keys, West Life, Jessica Simpson, Clara, Good Charlotte, Guy Sebastian, John Legend, and Los Lonely Boys. What's more, each CD packs in these exciting features: games, wallpapers, screensavers and cursors, all for your total enjoyment. Grab this rockin' combo offer now while supply lasts.

Eat-All-You-Can Chicken Craze promo

KENNY Rogers Roasters is giving its customers their fill of deliciously healthy chicken at an irresistible price. For only P169, customers can enjoy all the chicken they want plus all the rice they can eat with Kenny Rogers Roasters newest Eat-All-You-Can Chicken Craze promo. From 6 p.m. onwards, everyday, chicken lovers can choose from Kenny Rogers Roasters' mouth-watering selections: Classic, Spicy, California Roast or Krispy Fried Chicken. With the Eat-All-You Can Chicken Craze, you can savor the delicious taste of Kenny Rogers Roasters Chicken any way you like it . Have your fill of the delicious flavors of Kenny Rogers Rosters Chicken with the Eat-All-You Can Chicken Craze, which is for dine-in orders only and runs until July 17, at all Kenny Rogers Roasters outlets nationwide.

Hands on service at Hands On Manila

WITH all the negative news that's been floating around lately, how do you solve a problem like Manila? Let volunteer organization Hands On Manila help you count the ways. A couple of hours spent playing with or just reading to a child in a shelter, a Saturday merienda partaken with street children, a morning engaged in beautifying a local park, or an afternoon shared with the elderly may seem insignificant to some but that is all it takes, really. The rewards you stand to get are immeasurable. The smiles on the kids' faces are truly priceless, the inexpressible gratitude in each warm hug from the lolos and lolas are more than enough reason for volunteers to keep coming back. Each project undertaken for abused and neglected children makes them feel that someone does care, giving them hope and uplifting their spirit. Every park and coastal clean up is a very easy-to-do and practical contribution to bringing back a greener environment. "By providing mostly 'entry-level' volunteer opportunities for the average Filipino, we hope people will realize that we each have the power and the responsibility to effect positive change," says Lisa Crisostomo, executive director of Hands On Manila. "There are no skills required, so whether you want to paint murals, bake cookies, or tutor Math, you can participate in a wide range of our service projects." Learn more about how you can help make a difference by attending Hands On Manila's New Volunteers Orientation today, June 28, 6 p.m. at Powerbooks Megamall Building A. For inquiries, please call 843-5231, 843-7044 or email homla@info.com.ph.

Product FILES

A cheddar-ific new treat from Spuds

JACK'N JILL
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BITE into the tempting new addition to the crunchy Spuds family - Jack 'n Jill Spuds Cheddar-ific Cheese. Perfectly crisp and smothered with rich cheddar cheese, new Spuds Cheddar-ific Cheese is every potato-cheese lover's dream. Made with the crispiest and freshest potato ingredients, JNJ Spuds Cheddar-ific Cheese makes for a hip, affordable and happening snack. The crunchy slices of flavorful premium potato chips are stacked in a handy canister, making Spuds a perfect carry-around treat anytime. Other Spuds variants you'd love to try are classic Salt and Pepper, popular Sour Cream and Chives and Hickory Barbeque. Take the regular 205g can on your family trips or grab a junior 64g can for a solo treat. There's really more reason to keep the munching going with this cheddar-ific new recipe from Spuds and Jack 'n Jill, now available in leading groceries and supermarkets nationwide.

Meet Mr StarCard

CALTEX retail business consultant Rafael 'Ray' Melo, is designated the new manager of the Caltex StarCard, the business solution to efficient fleet management. An Economics graduate form the University of the Philippines, Ray has been working for Caltex since 1996 and is a Chairman's Award recipient as member of the StarMart Initial Start Up Launching Team in the Philippines. Since then, he has climbed up the ranks of Caltex Marketing business unit in particular for the Greater Manila retail district. Customer service, safety measures, hard work, market feel and a genuine liking for people mark Ray's management style as he concentrated on his new Caltex product assignment.

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Enrique Z. Clemente was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. No. 218, Page No. 44, Book No. V, Series of 2005 of Notary Public Anthony T. Co of Muntinlupa City (PDI-June 21, 28, July 5, 2005)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE JULIO DRILON DUMANCAS AND MARTA DIMAAPI DUMANCAS WERE EXTRAJUDICIALLY SETTLED AMONG THEIR HEIRS AS PER DOC. NO. 12 PAGE NO. 04 BOOK NO. 02 SERIES OF 2005 BEFORE NOTARY PUBLIC VILMA HILDA VILLANUEVA-FABELLA OF CITY OF PARAÑAQUE. (PDI JUNE 28, JULY 5 & 12, 2005)

INVITATION FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES

COTTON USA

Cotton Council International, the export and promotions arm of the US cotton industry and licensor of the COTTON USA Mark, would like to invite interested public relations firms to submit a Letter of Intent for consultancy services. As its prospective public relations arm in the Philippines. Cotton Council International will require consultancy services for the following:

- Strategy development of its marketing and public relations program in the country, which will service CCI's accredited licensees as well as its end consumers. This will include promotions, media releases and brand awareness of the COTTON USA Mark.
- Implementation of the developed marketing and public relations program.

Interested parties may send a letter outlining their experience and qualifications to Mr. Jeff Coey, Regional Director for China and Southeast Asia, 20/F Zoroastrian Building, 101 Leighton Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong tel: 852-2890-2755 and fax: 852-2882-5463 no later than July 15, 2005.

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Conference on curbing corruption in office

THE MEANING of Wrong in Shades of Gray, not Black and White: How far would corporate executives really go to seal the deal?

The Hills Governance Center is holding a conference entitled "Corrupt Practices in the Private Sector, Part II – As Seen by Rank & File and Middle Management." This is a follow-up conference to Dr. Roberto's 2004 announcement of the survey results on CEO Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Corporate Misconduct."

In July last year, he noted that corruption is alive and well in private corporations, although CEOs and senior corporate executives paint it in shades of gray. Curbing corporate corruption, Dr. Roberto argued, required a balance of ethics and compliance programs, one taking precedence over the other depending on the situation. He said that by institutionalizing a culture of compliance that is backed by systems designed to reduce the prospect of criminal activity within the company and detect such activity where it exists," companies could effectively deter misconduct in their ranks.

Dr. Roberto proposed that the next step should be to get a deeper understanding of why executives hold on to negative attitudes toward misconduct. He pointed out that the study was only part of the process of managing change. "With these findings," he stated, "we are at least on the second stage." The next question he posed then was, "How will it affect the corporations now that they know?" As a follow-up survey study, Dr. Roberto and the Hills Governance Center surveyed rank and file employees and middle management executives to see how they perceive corruption in the private sector now. Are there any changes? Find out on Thursday, June 30, 2005 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the 4th floor, JVR Function Rooms, AIM Conference Center Manila (ACCM) Building, Benavidez Cor Trasierra Legaspi Village, Makati City. The conference is also being sponsored by the World Bank. Interested parties may call Gina Arca or Ronnette Capiral at 892 40 11 locals 2139 and 2145 for registration.

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❶ Copy of Death Certificate
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"I am the Resurrection and the Life
He who believes in Me will live even
though he dies, and whoever believes
in Me will never die."
John 11: 25-26

Our Beloved MAMA

JUSTINA (JOSIE) MANUUD-SALCEDO

Peacefully joined the Lord
on June 26, 2005 at the age of 79.

She will be missed most by her beloved husband **Fred** (†); children **Joffre & Linda, Ricky** (†) & **Rory, Alex & Grace, Marisol & Steven, Pinky**; grandchildren **Coco & Maridelle, Richie & Geh, Peewee & Ace, Anna, Bingo, Erika, Stevie, Derrick, Sharon, Justin, Ranzy, Franco, Princess** and **Fritz**; great grandchildren, **Mae-Mae, Chesca, Daphne, Lance** and **Mitzie**; relatives and friends; by all of us who were given the grace to know and love her.

Her body lies in state at the chapel of Santuario de San Jose, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.

Interment will be on Thursday, June 30, 2005 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

In memory of
Our Beloved

Dra. MAGDALENA "Daling" LINAO GUERRERO-JURADO

(UST College of Medicine, Class 1940)

of Morong, Bataan, Philippines, and Hamilton Square, Trenton, New Jersey, USA

who died in the infinite grace of the Lord
after receiving the last Sacraments on June 22, 2005
in Trenton, New Jersey, U.S.A. at the age of 88.

Her children, **Benjie & Baby, Ito & Jeanette, Jette** (†) & **Susan**; her brothers and sisters, **Jaime & Virgie Villalobos, Eleanor** (†) & **Eduardo Mesina, Araceli** (†) & **Jaime Bernabe** (†), **Fe & Norberto Linao, Maria Belen & Bernard Trabel**; and all grandchildren, nephews and nieces request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will take place on Tuesday, June 28, 2005 at the Cemetery of Our Lady of Lourdes, Hamilton Township, Trenton, New Jersey, U.S.A.

In Loving Memory of

Felipa Carrillo-Flores, MD

of San Matias, Sto. Tomas, Pampanga and Macabebe, Pampanga
(01 November 1920 – 28 June 2002)

3rd Death Anniversary

The following Masses will be offered:

1. San Matias Parish – San Matias, Sto. Tomas, Pampanga	6:00 am
2. Good Shepherd Parish – Bulaon, San Fernando, Pampanga	6:00 am
3. Parish of St. Francis Xavier – Nasugbu, Batangas	6:00 am
4. St. James the Great Parish – Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	6:20 am
5. Our Lady of Pentecost Parish – Loyola Heights, QC	6:30 am
6. Our Lady of Remedies Chapel – Don Enrique Hts., QC	6:30 am
7. Immaculate Conception Parish – Pittsburgh, PA (USA)	6:45 am
8. San Fernando Cathedral – San Fernando, Pampanga	7:00 am
9. St. Bernard Parish – Oakland, CA (USA)	7:00 am
10. San Guillermo Parish – Bacolor, Pampanga	8:00 am
11. Pastoral de Migraciones, Misioneros del Verbo Divino – Madrid (Spain)	8:30 am
12. Apalit Parish Church – Apalit, Pampanga	10:30 am
13. St. Cecilia Parish – Mt. Prospect, IL (USA)	12:00 nn
14. UST Hospital Pay Chapel – U.S.T., Espana, Manila	12:15 pm
15. Casa de Formacion, Misioneros del Verbo Divino – Madrid(Spain)	1:20 pm
16. Parroquia de Nuestra Senora del Espino – Madrid (Spain)	5:30 pm
17. Passionist Monastery – Chicago, IL	6:00 pm
18. Parroquia Virgen del Alba – Alcorcon, Madrid (Spain)	8:00 pm
19. Parroquia de Nuestra Senora del Carmen – Sevilla (Spain)	8:00 pm

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The Board of Directors,
Management and Staff
of
ABLE MUSIC INTERNATIONAL, INC.
express their heartfelt condolences to the family of

EDGARDO "EGAY" A. ALCANZARE

(June 03, 1950 – June 25, 2005)
MANAGING DIRECTOR

Who peacefully joined his Creator on June 25, 2005

He is survived by wife **Vicky**,
children **Elaine, Dax, Vincent, Vernon** and **Abby**.

His ashes lie in state at the Santuario Del Santo Cristo Parish Church Mortuary, F. Blumentrit St., Kabayanan, San Juan, Metro Manila.

Interment will be on June 28, 2005 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Santuario Del Santo Cristo Cemetery.

The **Able Family** requests the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
— 2 Corinthians 5:8

MESSAGE OF THANKS

For visiting us and being with us
in our time of sorrows...
For praying with us and for us...
For the Mass cards and messages
of sympathy and condolence...
For the beautiful flowers to express
compassion...
For joining us in our nightly vigil...
For attending the masses and funeral rites...
For thinking of us in our grief...
For all that you have done to console
our hearts and most especially to the Clergy
and Authorities of the Archdiocese of Manila...

Our sincerest gratitude.

From the Family of the late

REV. MSGR. JUSTINO CABALLERO ORTIZ

Mass to be held on his 40th day
at Pope Pius XII Catholic Center,
U.N. Avenue, Manila, 7:00 p.m., Wednesday,
July 20, 2005

MELCHOR T. ARCANGEL

Former Councilor and Municipal Secretary of Mandaluyong

Passed away on June 26, 2005 at the age of 87.

His body lies in state at his residence on 303 J. Rizal St., Mandaluyong City

He is survived by wife **Francisca Arcangel**; children **Marcia, Flor, Vic** and **Lito**; in-laws **Jacinto, Fred** and **Dottie**; grandchildren **Josel, Cez, Jerry, Janet, Marja, Aimee, Melfran, Papuz, Vicson, Rea, Vanessa** and **Voltaire**.

Interment at the San Felipe Neri Catholic Church will be announced later.

Please pray for the eternal repose of the soul of **Tatay Melchor.**

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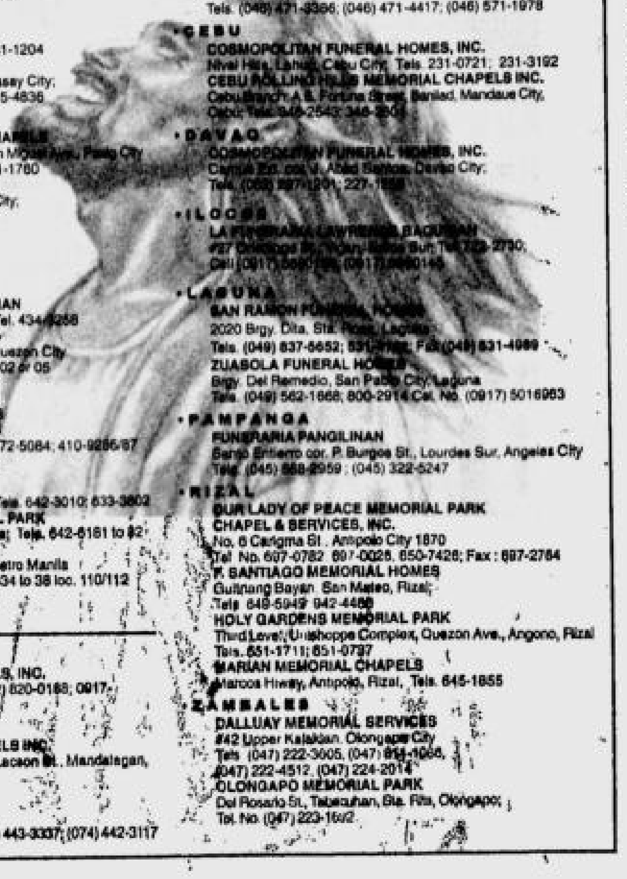


BUSINESS

Bataan firm confirms sale of 83% stake to Tybalt Ltd.

By Ronnel W. Domingo

BATAAN Polyethylene Corp. yesterday said its foreign shareholders sold their combined 83 percent stake in the company to Cayman Islands firm Tybalt Ltd. last June 23.

British firm BP and Malaysia's Petroliam Nasional Bhd held 38.5 percent each of BPC, while Japan's Sumitomo Corp. held 6 percent.

BPC president Tony Atkins said in a statement that the purchase of the shares "augurs well for the further development of the local petrochemical industry and for the country in general."

Atkins said the formal transfer of the shares coincided with the delayed turnover of the plant facilities, the interest for which were earlier acquired by Polymax Worldwide Ltd. of the Metro Alliance Group, which specializes in chemical production, distribution and logistics in the country.

It was Metro Alliance, majority owned by "plastics king" William Gatchalian, which bought the senior secured debts of BPC from World Bank unit International Finance Corp. in 2004.

According to BPC, the Philippines lags behind other Southeast Asian countries in the growth and development of the petrochemical industry.

The entry of Tybalt Ltd. was expected to strengthen the midstream sector of the local industry and reduce dependence on imported raw materials.

The BPC plant has a rated production capacity of 275,000 metric tons of resins-the raw material for plastics products.

Industry sources said the new owners of BPC were keen on the early resumption of operations of the BPC plant in Mariveles town, and that they intended to position it competitively with the petrochemical plants in the Asean region.

In February 2004, the IFC announced having signed an agreement to transfer and assign to Polymax all IFC rights and interests in loans to BPC.

According to the IFC website, this transaction provided a means by which a new project sponsor could resume production and maintain employment of workers at the plant.

The plant stopped operating shortly after it started commercial operations in Feb. 1, 2001, due to unfavorable market conditions.

BPC, whose plant was put up at a cost of $330 million, was commissioned with the support of IFC's financing in August 2000.

118% OF PHILIPPINE GDP

'04 public sector debt hit ₱5.3T

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S outstanding public sector debt (OPSD) reached P5.3 trillion as of end-2004, increasing by 4 percent from the previous year as various government sectors continued to resort to borrowings to plug budget deficiencies.

The latest OPSD was equivalent to 118 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

Data from the Department of Finance showed that the latest OPSD was composed of P1.7 trillion in domestic debt, and P3.6 trillion in foreign liabilities.

The latest domestic debt figure was 11.6 percent higher than the one recorded in end-2003, while the foreign debt was 1.3 percent higher than the figure posted the previous year.

Although the OPSD continues to rise, the growth of the country's liabilities is decelerating, therefore making the debt sustainable, National Treasurer Omar Cruz said.

The country's debt will only begin recording a decline when the public sector wipes out its budget deficit and post a surplus.

But Cruz said that with the fiscal reforms in place—such as prudent spending and improved revenue collection—the deficit of the public sector was already starting to diminish, resulting in the slowing down of the growth of debt.

Double counting

The DOF has categorized the OPSD into two sectors, the non-financial and the financial.

The non-financial sector is composed of the national government, local government units, the Central Bank Board of Liquidators, social security institutions, and the state-owned corporations, which the national government is monitoring.

The financial sector is composed of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and government financial institutions (GFIs).

The non-financial public sector debt alone was pegged at P4.6 trillion, thus making up the bulk of the public sector debt. The figure represents a 6.6-percent increase from the end-2003 figure.

The financial sector accounted for P1.3 trillion of the latest OPSD. The debt of the financial sector was actually lower by P130.9 billion from the previous year.

The DOF said it has decided to separate the debt of the non-financial from that of the financial sector, to prevent the "miscomputation," or double counting, of government data.

In observance of international standards in reporting debt data as recommended by the International Monetary Fund, the DOF has removed intra-government borrowings as part of the OPSD.

Intra-government debt

The DOF explained that intra-government debt, such as a government corporation's borrowing from the national government, should not be considered a government debt because the money came from government anyway.

Cruz, emerging from the annual meeting of the World Association of Debt Management Offices held in Geneva, Switzerland last week, said in a briefing that the 50 member countries have discussed several debt management policies.

According to Cruz, the group has suggested putting a threshold on debt so as to measure sustainability. Cruz said the countries considered debt to have reached unsustainable levels when its growth continues to accelerate and remain beyond 60 percent of a country's GDP for some time.

The country's treasurer said that while the Philippines' OPSD was 118 percent of the GDP, the growth in debt was seen to be slowing down.

He said the group also agreed to adopt the principle of allotting sufficient budget for basic services, including education, aside from efforts to improve a country's fiscal position.

Neighborly take on waste management

CORPORATE CITIZEN

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THERE'S cash in trash for the residents of Cebu communities and their counterpart in the private sector. Cebu Holdings Inc. has gathered the support of the communities to work out a viable waste management scheme.

CEBU CITY—It's Saturday and Barangay Luz, the third biggest community adjacent to the Cebu Business Park, is buzzing with activity.

Residents are making a beeline to the designated collection area in the barangay to sell their recyclable materials, such as tin cans, plastic bottles, juice packs and newspapers.

Others are busy converting their biodegradable waste into rich compost, with the help of earthworms, right in their own backyards.

The barangay sells about 40 sacks of compost a week for P150 each, while the worms, or African Night Crawlers, go for P500 a kilo.

In nearby Barangay Hipodromo, residents are doing the same thing, with 80 percent of the residents segregating their household waste.

Some of the housewives have even learned to make tote bags out of empty tetra packs, which they sell for P20-P40 each.

It was not always so.

There was a time when the barangay residents just put all their trash together to be collected by the city government, contributing to the estimated 520 tons of trash generated daily by Cebu City.

But through the cooperation among Cebu Holdings Inc. and the five neighboring communities under the Cebu Business Park and Neighboring Barangays Altruistic Alliance Inc., residents not only earn extra from recycling, they also reduce their waste and help protect the environment.

The cooperation traces its roots to the Ayala Center's own solid waste management project launched in December 2001.

By simply separating the recyclable, biodegradable and nonbiodegradable waste, the volume of trash generated by the 300 merchants of Ayala Center Cebu went down from five tons to three tons a day.

CHI helped replicate the program in Barangay Hipodromo starting 2002, in partnership with the University of San Carlos' Department of Civil Engineering and the Rotary Club of Cebu, Mabolo.

Turning on the residents to the benefits of solid waste management through education and advocacy efforts was the first order of the day, followed by the use of color-coded plastic containers, courtesy of the Rotary Club, for waste segregation, and finally, income generation from the recyclable waste.

Barangay Luz, on the other hand, launched its "Kuwarta sa Basura" program in October 2002.

Starting 2003, recycled plastics are turned into flowers, bags, plant hangers and flower pots. Tetra packs are sewn into bags.

At the end of 2003, the program had generated over P100,000 in savings and provided livelihood opportunities for many of the women in the barangay.

But more than the income, the biggest beneficiary of the program was the environment because of the reduction in the volume of waste generated by the communities.

Barangay Luz and Hipodromo's efforts to protect to the environment were recognized when they were selected as finalists in the nationwide search for model communities in eco-waste management, out of over 47,000 barangay units nationwide.

The cooperation does not stop there.

Through the CBP-NBAAI, all five neighboring communities of the Cebu Business Park get first crack at manpower requirements of the Ayala Center Cebu and they are provided training in community development, so that the barangay can draw up programs to deal with vital issues.

CBP-NBAAI was formed in 2000 out of CHI's realization that it can not be a good corporate citizen if it does not do more for its neighbors other than making the usual donations.

CHI targeted Hipodromo, Luz, Kamputhaw, Mabolo and Carreta because the families displaced by the development of the Cebu Business Park beginning in 1990 had resettled here.

Apart from solid waste management, the cooperation extends to skills inventory and training, information sharing and security—issues identified as most important by the communities themselves.

By helping resolve these issues, CHI is out to prove that it is not just a good neighbor, but a partner, as well.

SSS to sell EPCIB stake ... if price is right

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE STATE-owned Social Security System is still keen on selling its 29 percent stake in Equitable PCI Bank, but it wants a higher price for the huge bloc than what was earlier agreed upon with Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

"The circumstances have changed since then ... the market conditions have improved, so it's not wise to sell at P43 (per share) when shares are now at P50-51," Corazon dela Paz, SSS president, told the INQUIRER.

But if the sale had pushed through last year, Dela Paz said the SSS would have obtained a good value as well since the cash proceeds would have earned interest income if reinvested in financial instruments.

If the Supreme Court would allow the sale to push through, Dela Paz said, the SSS would thus set a higher price.

The deal signed with BDO in December 2003 did not push through. A group of retirees had asked the court to restrain the sale, saying that the SSS could get a better price by bidding out the stake instead of negotiating its sale. The deal also drew flak from the Go family, which has management control of the bank, as well as some senators.

Dela Paz said that the SSS was eager to hear what the high court would have to say about the case.

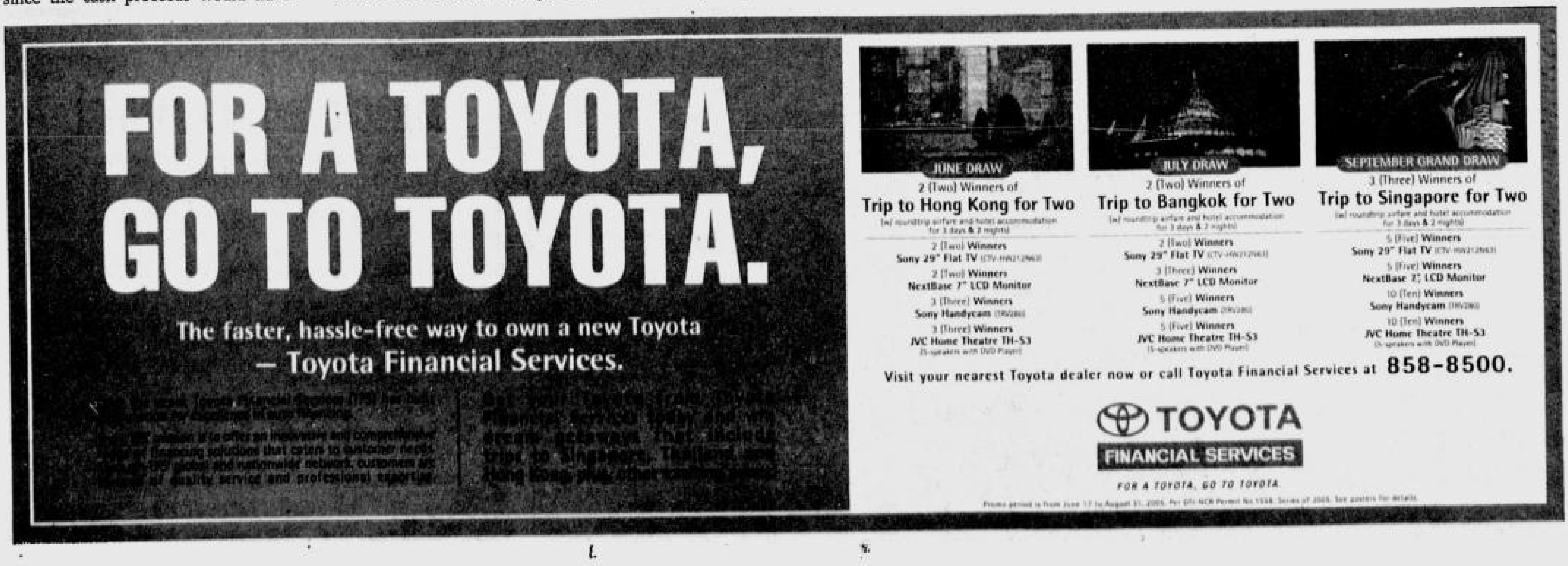
"I want this resolved already," Dela Paz said in an interview. "We'd like to know when we can bid out and when we can't because there are lots of lost opportunities. We'd like to find out what powers we have to move our assets to take advantage of opportunities. When can we negotiate and when can we not? In the past, we were able to enter into negotiated sales."

In 1999, the SSS and Government Service Insurance System provided the financial muscle to the Go family's Equitable Bank, then the tenth biggest bank, to acquire the controlling 72 percent stake in PCI Bank. The bank was jointly put on the block by feuding PCI Bank shareholders—the Lopez and Gokongwei groups.

The merged Equitable PCI Bank is currently the country's third biggest Philippine lender and the fourth largest in terms of assets, next to the Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., the Bank of the Philippine Islands, and Citibank Philippines.

The government bloc in EPCIBank is now trying to acquire "ample leverage" in the 15-member board by expanding its representation from five to seven directors in proportion to the combined equity interest of the SSS and GSIS.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima recently urged the pension funds to protect their shares and use their combined voting stock as "agents" of change in the promotion of good corporate governance in EPCIBank.



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Know your vitamins

INSIDE OUT
Cory Quirino

IN ANSWER to numerous questions about nutrition, more specifically supplements, here is some basic information on vitamins:

Natural

Most vitamins are derived from natural sources and they come in the form of natural food, capsules, tablets, powders or liquids.

Example: Vitamin A is derived from fish oil, B complex from liver or yeast, Vitamin C from berries or rose hips, Vitamin E from wheat germ, corn, soy beans.

Tablets–most common form, easy storage, longer shelf life

Caplets–capsule-shaped tablets

Capsules–convenient, usual way to deliver oil-soluble vitamins - A, E, D

Gelatin capsules–made with an animal product, gelatin; must be stored away from light

Vegetable capsules–free of animal products, sugar, starches, made from vegetable/plant fiber

Soft gels–easy to swallow, is digested slowly

Powder–extra potency as in vitamin C

Liquids– easy mixing property

Intra oral sprays–low-dose concentration directly in the mouth, under the tongue

Sublinguals–tablets that dissolve under the tongue

Patches/implants–supply in measured amounts

All vitamins are organic. They are substances containing carbon.

Special needs

The body needs vitamins but what people require are not always the same. Certain special conditions require special food regimens.

Acne

Traditional treatment ranges from x-rays to tetracycline with varying degrees of success. Natural treatment includes:

Vitamin E (dry form)–400 iu daily

Betacarotene–10,000 iu daily

Zinc–15-50 mg chelated, 1 tablet with a meal

Acidophilous capsules–3-6 capsules, 3X daily

Cysteine–1 g daily, a half hour before meals with Vitamin C, 1,000 mg, 3X daily

Eliminate all processed foods. They are high in salt and iodized.

Caution: If you are taking a prescription medication for acne, don't take extra Vitamin A unless advised by a doctor.

Bad breath

Proper brushing and flossing are recommended.

1 chlorophyll tablet–1-3 X daily

3 Acidophilous capsules–3X daily

Zinc–50 mg daily

Baldness/falling hair

No guarantees, but the following have been suggested:

B complex–50 mg, 2X daily

Choline and inositol–1,000 mg each daily

Daily jojoba oil scalp massage and shampoo

Calcium–500 mg, and magnesium–250 mg, 1 daily

Cysteine–1,000 mg daily

Vitamin C–500 mg, morning and afternoon

Bleeding gums

1,000 mg Vitamin C complex with bioflavonoids, rutin and hesperidin, 3 X daily.

Bruises

Vitamin C complex, 1,000 mg with bioflavonoids, rutin, hesperidin–3X daily.

Burn

Place cold water on it.

Zinc–50 mg daily

Vitamin C–1,000 mg–bioflavonoids

Vitamin E –1,000 iu used orally and topically to prevent scarring

Cold feet

Wear socks at bedtime. Take a multi-mineral supplement with iodine 2X daily.

One kelp tablet daily.

Niacin and Vitamin E–for circulation

Gingko Biloba–60 mg, 1-3X daily

(Cold feet due to thyroid glands' not producing enough tyroxine)

Cold sores/herpes simplex

Lactobacillus acidophilous–3 capsules, 3X daily

Vitamin E oil–28,000 iu applied directly to the area

Lysine–3,000 mg daily in divided doses between meals

Preventive: Lysine, 500 mg daily (with water or juice–no protein)

Vitamin C–1,000 mg, 2X daily

Constipation

This is due to a lack of fiber in the diet, as well as water.

1 - 2 teaspoon psyllium fiber in juice before a meal

Dry skin

Vitamin E applied to dry skin

200-400 iu Vitamin E daily

Vitamin A–10,000 iu (for 3-5 days only)

Omega 3 fatty acid–1-3 capsules, 3X daily (or flaxseed oil

1-2 teaspoon added to salad dressing)

Affirmation:

"I take my health seriously with a smile."

A vitamin a day keeps your body in sync but a smile a day drives the frowns away.

Love and light!

Reference: Earl Mindell's Vitamin Bible for the 21st Century.

(Remember to consult your physician before trying any medication.)

Most dangerous fat

WELL AND GOOD
Tina Juan

THERE are two basic kinds of body fat—essential and storage fat. Essential fat is in the liver, bone marrow, heart, lungs and muscles. Storage fat is under the skin (subcutaneous) and around internal organs (internal fat).

Internal fat that surrounds parts within the abdominal cavity, like the stomach and intestines, is called visceral or intra-abdominal fat. It is also known as deep belly or central fat.

Visceral fat is what makes a belly hard and firm as if a person swallowed a basketball. Soft tummies with rolls of *bilbil* are mainly due to subcutaneous fat.

Though subcutaneous fat is unsightly, visceral fat may be more dangerous to your health according to current research. It is often associated with an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, stroke and some kinds of cancer.

One theory is that visceral fat releases more inflammatory molecules that trigger these diseases than other types of fat. Researchers are investigating why deep belly fat is so hazardous to health.

Waist size

A CT (computed tomography) or MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan is the only way to determine accurately how much visceral fat you have. But a tape measure can help you determine if your intra-abdominal fat is posing a risk to your health.

People most at risk are men with waistlines bigger than 40 inches and women with waists bigger than 35 inches.

Endocrinologist K. George Thampy said, "Men with a waist size larger than 40 inches have three times the risk of diabetes, high blood pressure and high cholesterol."

But scientists don't really know the waist size conducive to health. So even if your waistline is a few inches smaller than the borderline measurements, it would be safer to reduce it.

Older men and women should keep track of their waist sizes because they can have large amounts of visceral fat even if they are of normal weight. No one is sure why, though it is suspected it is due to hormones.

Both men and women tend to store more fat in the abdominal area than other parts of the body as they get older. Postmenopausal women who stored fat in their hips, buttocks and thighs before end up with thickened waistlines because of accumulated visceral fat.

Stress

People under constant stress have elevated levels of the stress hormone cortisol, suspected of playing a role in accumulating visceral fat. Smoking also raises cortisol levels. One study revealed that, under stress, even lean women had excess visceral fat.

Pamela Peeke, a leading researcher of women's weight issues and author of "Fight Fat After Forty," said three factors increases visceral fat in women: poor lifestyle, declining levels of estrogen and chronic stress.

Better than diet

Studies indicate that losing weight and exercise are the best ways to reduce visceral fat. But dieting may not be as effective.

A study of obese diabetic postmenopausal women found that dieting alone did not reduce visceral fat. Exercise alone and exercise plus dieting were the methods that worked. The women walked for 50 minutes three times a week. Researchers recommend walking briskly as if you are late for an appointment.

In another study, aerobic exercises for 45 minutes five times a week helped overweight postmenopausal women aged 50-75 lose 3.4 to 6.9 percent visceral fat.

First fat lost

Many people notice that their clothes fit better after a couple of weeks of exercise even though they have not lost weight. The standard explanation is that muscles get heavier while fat cells get smaller. Another reason could be that visceral fat is first to go through exercise.

Other studies have also indicated that exercise can improve blood sugar, cholesterol and triglyceride levels even without weight loss. This could also be partly due to the loss of visceral fat.

Lipo doesn't work

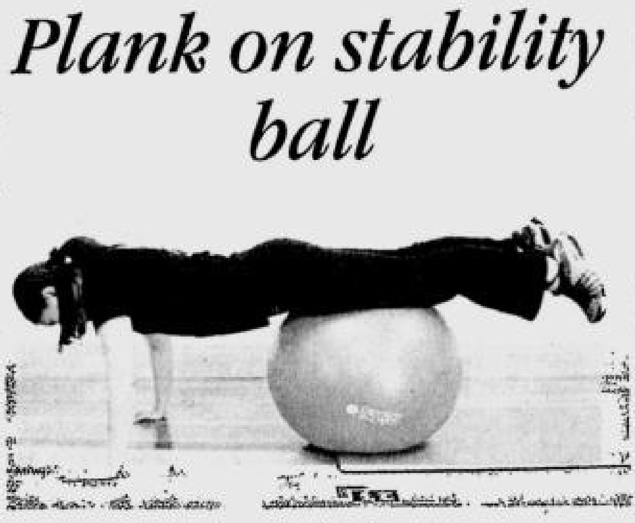
Liposuction may seem to be the answer for those too lazy to exercise and want an easy way to lose their visceral fat. Unfortunately, liposuction can only be done on subcutaneous fat.

A study showed that liposuction had no health benefits in terms of improving cholesterol, triglyceride or sugar levels even though several pounds of subcutaneous fat were removed. This seems to confirm the theory that deep abdominal fat is more dangerous than fat closer to the

MOST/C3

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Plank on stability ball



THIS exercise strengthens the chest, shoulders, triceps and torso (abdominals and back).

Equipment:

Stability ball. As a substitute, you can do the exercise on a firm bed or gym bench.

Exercise technique:

1. Kneel down with the ball in front of you.
2. Place your torso on the ball and roll forward until you have both hands on the floor. Your legs should be straight behind you at hip level.
3. Slowly walk your hands out to the desired distance.
4. Hold for the desired length of time or make the exercise dynamic by walking with your hands forward and backward.

Performance tips:

1. Look down at the floor but keep your neck in line with your spine.
2. Pull shoulders away from your ears to keep your neck "long."
3. Keep your abs pulled in lightly so your spine does not sag.
4. Beginners should keep the ball under their thighs.
5. More advanced exercisers can move forward until the ball is under their shins or ankles. You can also do push-ups from this position,

Repetitions:

Hold for 10 to 15 seconds. Do three sets.

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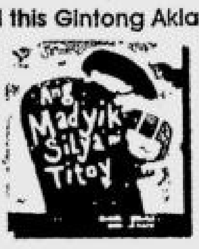

WIN this Gintong Aklat today! June 28, 2005 Today's Question
Who is the author of the award-winning anthology *Eros, Thanatos, Cubao*?
A. Paul Dumol B. Tony Perez C. Rosario de Guzman Lingat

Written by Russell Molina
Drawing by Marcus Nada
Published by Adarna House

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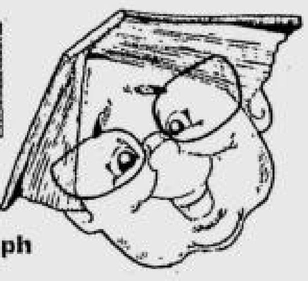
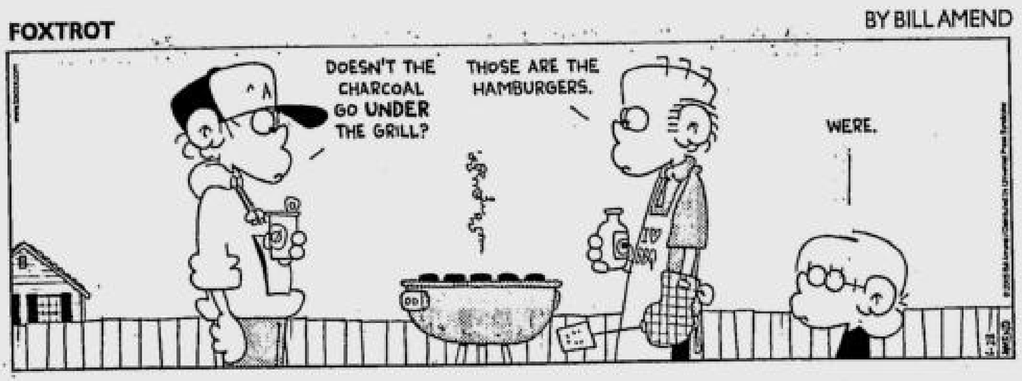


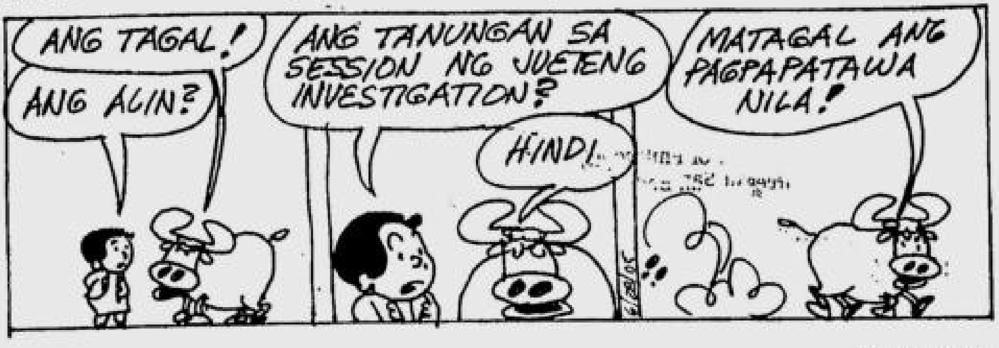
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


DOESN'T THE CHARCOAL GO UNDER THE GRILL?
THOSE ARE THE HAMBURGERS.
WERE.

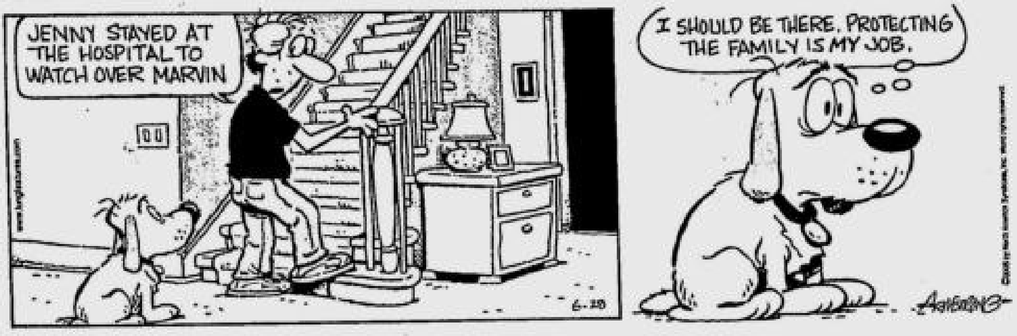
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG TAGAL!
ANG ALIN?
ANG TANUNGAN SA SESSION NG JUETENG INVESTIGATION?
HINDI.
MATAGAL ANG PAGPAPATAWA NILA!

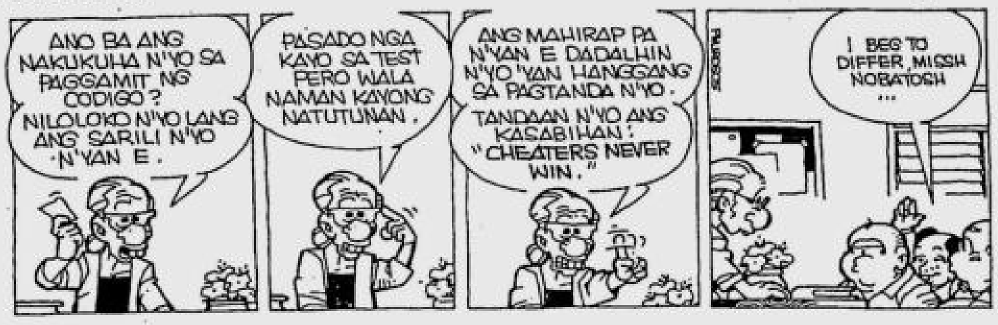
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


JENNY STAYED AT THE HOSPITAL TO WATCH OVER MARVIN
I SHOULD BE THERE. PROTECTING THE FAMILY IS MY JOB.
6-28

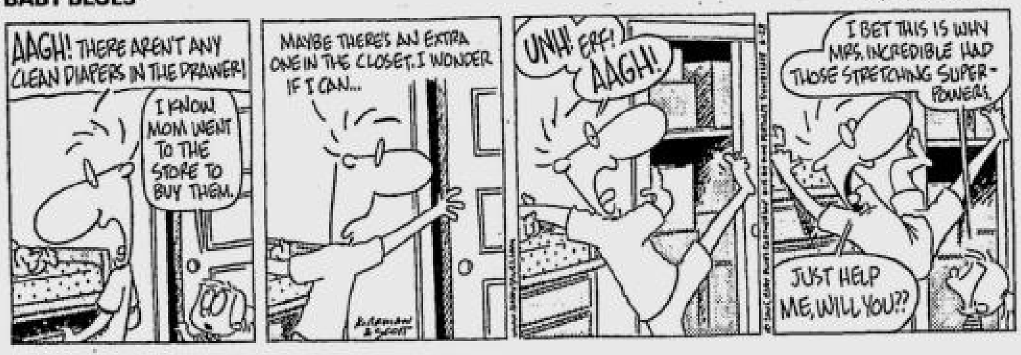
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO BA ANG NAKUKUHA N'YO SA PAGGAMIT NG CODIGO? NILOLOKO N'YO LANG ANG SARILI N'YO N'YAN E.
PASADO NGA KAYO SA TEST PERO WALA NAMAN KAYONG NATUTUNAN.
ANG MAHIRAP PA N'YAN E DADALHIN N'YO 'YAN HANGGANG SA PAGTANDA N'YO.
TANDAAN N'YO ANG KASABIHAN: "CHEATERS NEVER WIN."
I BEG TO DIFFER, MISSH NOBATOSH ...

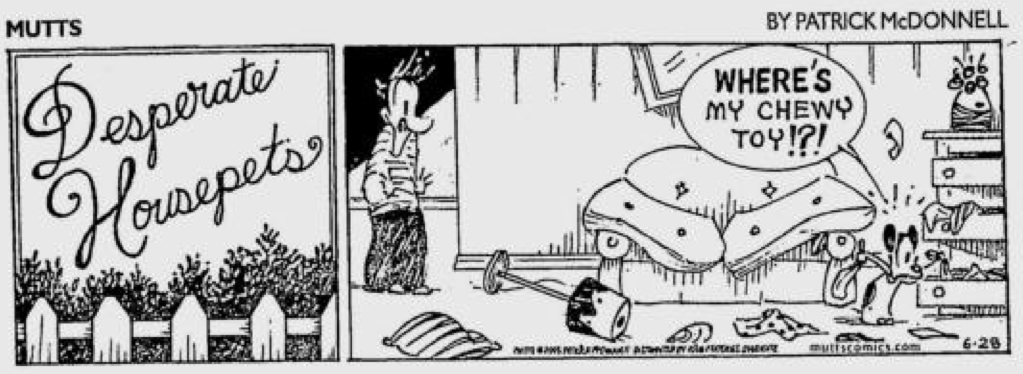
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


AAGH! THERE AREN'T ANY CLEAN DIAPERS IN THE DRAWER!
I KNOW. MOM WENT TO THE STORE TO BUY THEM.
MAYBE THERE'S AN EXTRA ONE IN THE CLOSET. I WONDER IF I CAN...
UNH! ERF! AAGH!
I BET THIS IS WHY MRS. INCREDIBLE HAD THOSE STRETCHING SUPER-POWERS.
JUST HELP ME, WILL YOU??

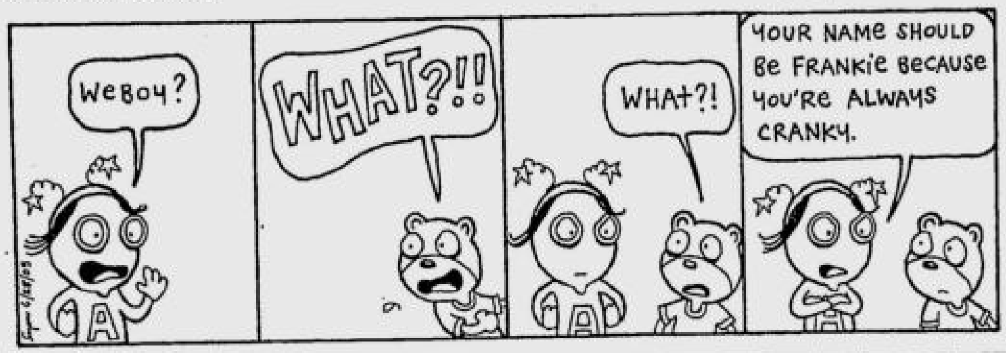
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


Desperate Housepets
WHERE'S MY CHEWY TOY!?!
muttscomics.com
6·28

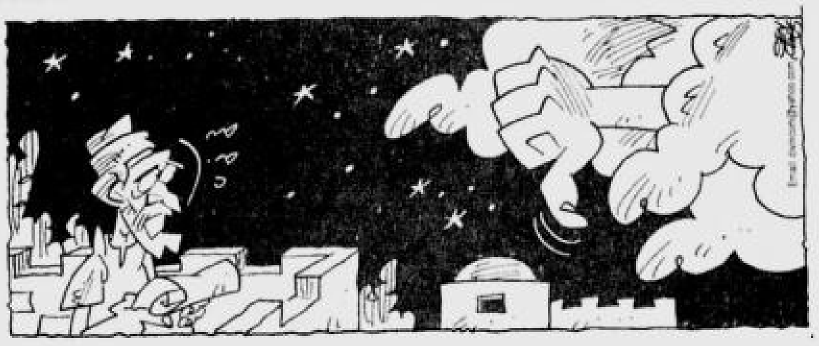
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WEBOY?
WHAT?!!
WHAT?!
YOUR NAME SHOULD BE FRANKIE BECAUSE YOU'RE ALWAYS CRANKY.

DIVINE COMEDY

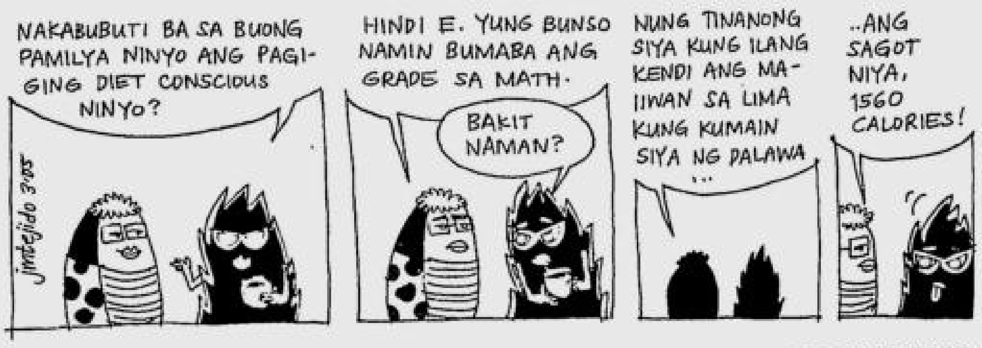
BY STEVEN PABALINAS



NATANGGAP DIN NI PROPETA DANIEL ANG "SIGN FROM HEAVEN" PARA SA ISANG DESISYON NA KANYANG GAGAWIN

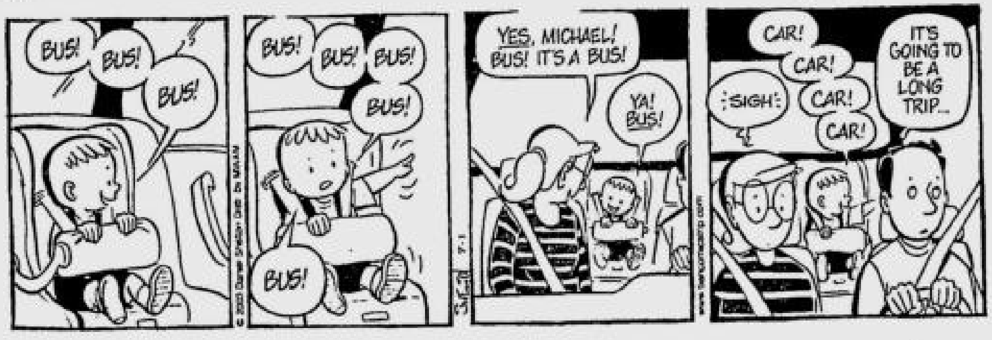
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKABUBUTI BA SA BUONG PAMILYA NINYO ANG PAGIGING DIET CONSCIOUS NINYO?
HINDI E. YUNG BUNSO NAMIN BUMABA ANG GRADE SA MATH.
BAKIT NAMAN?
NUNG TINANONG SIYA KUNG ILANG KENDI ANG MAIIWAN SA LIMA KUNG KUMAIN SIYA NG DALAWA ...
..ANG SAGOT NIYA, 1560 CALORIES!
jmtejido 3'05

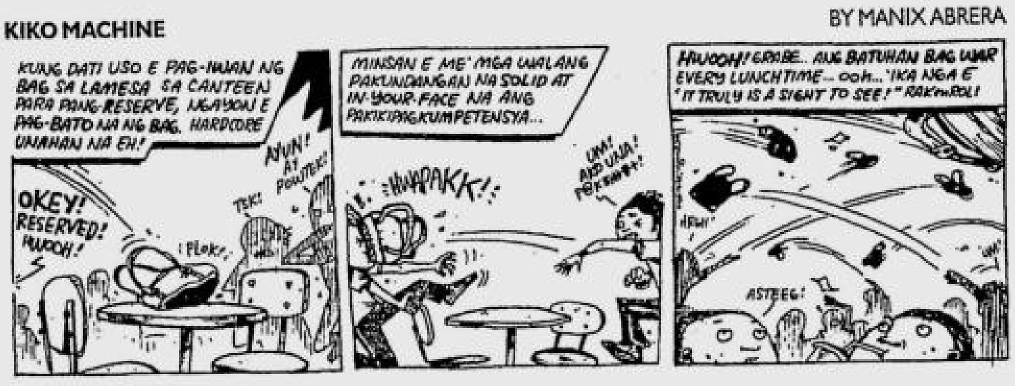
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BUS! BUS! BUS!
BUS! BUS! BUS! BUS! BUS!
YES, MICHAEL! BUS! IT'S A BUS!
YA! BUS!
CAR! CAR! CAR! CAR!
:SIGH:
IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG TRIP...

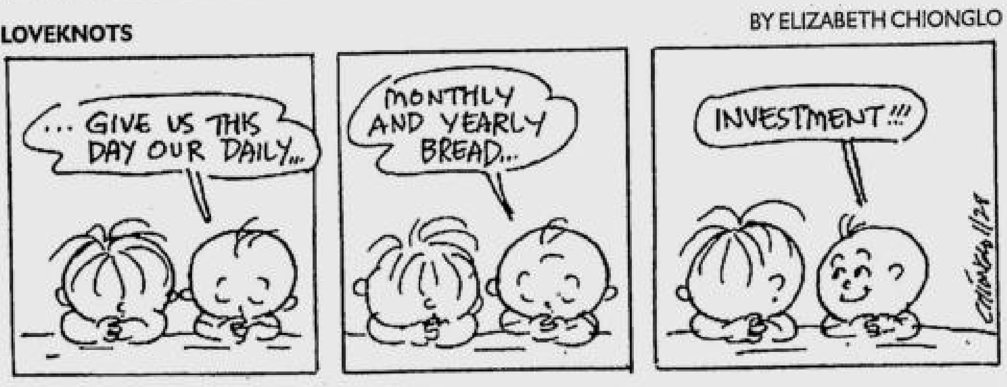
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KUNG DATI USO E PAG-IWAN NG BAG SA LAMESA SA CANTEEN PARA PANG-RESERVE, NGAYON E PAG-BATO NA NG BAG. HARDCORE UNAHAN NA EH!
OKEY! RESERVED! HUOOH!
!PLOK!
TEK!
AYUN! AT POWTEK!
MINSAN E ME' MGA WALANG PAKUNDANGAN NA SOLID AT IN-YOUR-FACE NA ANG PAKIKIPAGKUMPETENSYA...
HWAPAKK!
UM! AKO UNA! PEKSMAN!
HWOOH! GRABE.. ANG BATUHAN BAG WAR EVERY LUNCHTIME... ooh... 'IKA NGA E "IT TRULY IS A SIGHT TO SEE!" RAK'nROL!
ASTEEG!

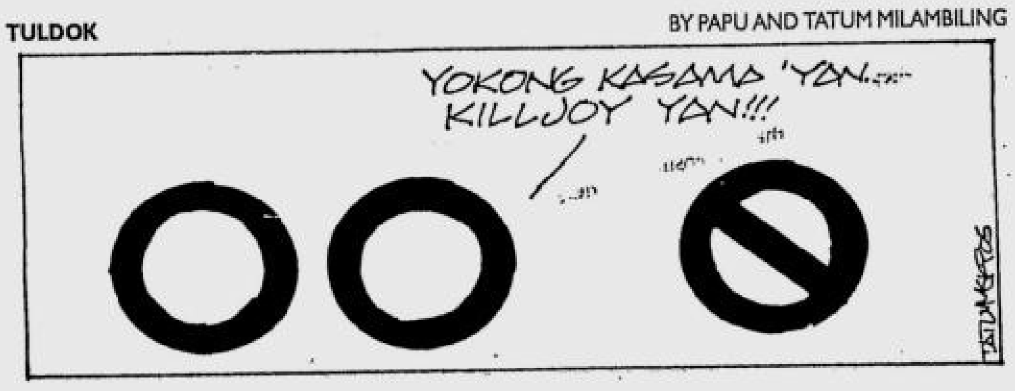
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


... GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY...
MONTHLY AND YEARLY BREAD...
INVESTMENT!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


YOKONG KASAMA 'YAN... KILLJOY YAN!!!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You understand people, and this gives you a wonderful sense of timing in your speech and your presentation style. You have enormous wit and humor. You are spontaneous, and you generally go with your feelings. You enjoy the limelight; certainly, you need appreciation. Enormous changes are possible for you this year.
Birthdate of: Kathy Bates, actress; John Cusack, actor; Gilda Radner, comedian.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): For the next six weeks, it's party time for your sign. The arts, the hospitality industry, vacations, romance and playful activities or work with children are all blessed. Enjoy!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You really want to make where you live look more attractive now. In the next few weeks, expect to be buying pretty things for your home. It's a good time to entertain as well. Enjoy family gatherings!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): The next six weeks are an excellent time for negotiations, wheeling and dealing, and making contracts. Your communication skills are hot!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're very empowered now, with three planets in your sign. However, as Venus shifts into Leo today, finances, shopping and money issues become more important.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): With fair Venus in your sign now, you actually look more attractive to others. The next four weeks is a great time to buy wardrobe items. It's also an excellent time to socialize.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Solitude in beautiful surroundings will definitely appeal to you in the next few weeks. You need peace and quiet to offset your increased social schedule!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The month ahead is a beautifully social time for you. The recent shift of Venus makes you more popular with friends as well. Accept all invitations!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): If you can travel anywhere or increase your education in some way, do it. Bosses, VIPs, parents and people in authority are willing to help you now.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Although you have to deal with a lot of red-tape details like insurance matters, taxes, debt and sorting out things about shared property, you also have a heightened appreciation of beauty now. Visit pretty places.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): In the next few weeks, you could receive gifts and goodies that are quite unexpected. Your partner might also get a raise or bonus.

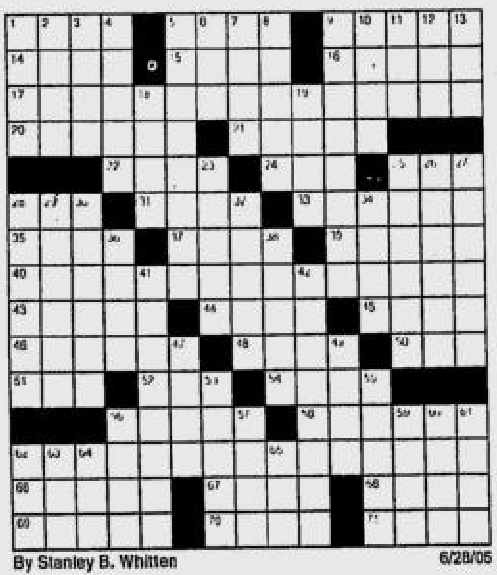
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Venus now opposes your sign. This is like getting hit on the head with a feather boa. You can talk about important things with partners and close friends now.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Even though you're in a party mood, you'll find that work is easier because co-workers are helpful. This means things are going great in several areas of your life.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Track numbers
5 "__ Don't Preach"
9 Talking Heads singer
14 Challenge
15 Yemen metropolis
16 Like human ears
17 Forgotten, perhaps
20 Consider
21 Perfect
22 Pitch symbol
24 BPOE member
25 Noah's boat
28 Goose the gas
31 City on the Oka River
33 Tenant
35 Yale grads
37 Needle case
39 Balm
40 Middleman
43 Along a rotation line
44 Land paper
45 Tight closure
46 Rang
48 Epic tale
50 Layer
51 Unit of work
52 AFL partner
54 Slight
56 Editorial directives
58 On the roster
62 Feeling poorly
66 Model Campbell
67 12/24 and 12/31
68 Emerald Isle
69 Prank
70 Cerise and puce
71 Winter fall

DOWN
1 Small
2 Barry or Brubeck
3 Sediment
4 Crevasse pinnacle
5 Exploiter of lower tastes
6 Contribute
7 Start of cure?
8 Battery electrode
9 Gloomy to the max
10 Mournful cry
11 Slugger's stat
12 Bottom line
13 Old English letter
18 Woody's boy
19 Jodie Foster film
23 Bad smelling
25 Sawing logs
26 Show
27 Sharply
28 Created anew
29 Magic potion
30 Compressing with a clamp
32 Monday in Monterrey
34 Old adages
36 Males-only affair
38 Girder piece
41 Emotionally exciting
42 Like a stiletto
47 Weight-loss plan
49 Diva's song
53 Catchall category
55 __ Park, CO
56 Big truck
57 Ballesteros of golf
59 Watery
60 Architect Saarinen
61 Sketched
62 Actress O'Connor
63 Bobbsey twin
64 Period
65 Married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By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

6/28/05

Monday's Puzzle Solved

B	L	A	B	■	C	O	M	O	■	S	W	A	M	I
E	A	S	E	■	O	N	E	S	■	C	E	D	A	R
S	U	P	E	R	B	O	W	L	■	H	A	S	T	E
T	R	I	T	E	R	■	S	O	U	L	S	■	■	■
S	A	C	■	P	A	S	■	■	L	E	E	W	A	Y
■	■	■	F	A	S	H	I	O	N	P	L	A	T	E
S	T	R	A	Y	■	U	N	C	A	P	■	G	I	L
C	U	E	D	■	E	N	D	U	E	■	P	O	L	L
O	L	D	■	U	N	T	I	L	■	T	E	N	T	S
F	L	Y	I	N	G	S	A	U	C	E	R	■	■	■
F	E	E	D	E	R	■	■	S	A	P	■	L	L	A
■	■	■	E	A	S	E	L	■	R	E	B	U	T	S
K	A	R	A	T	■	B	U	T	T	E	R	C	U	P
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Y	E	M	E	N	■	S	U	B	S	■	E	D	E	N

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6/28/05

Parapsychology now a college subject

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

Given the interest and controversy generated by New Age topics, it has to be studied in depth

THIS school year, for the first time, a new college and highly controversial course will be included as required subject for incoming senior students of Philosophy and Human Resources at San Beda College.

The course is called New Age Philosophy and Parapsychology and I was invited to teach it for one semester.

Frankly, I was surprised when asked to handle the subject by the head of the Philosophy Department, Prof. Raffy Dolor, whom I had never met. He said he always had a deep interest in the subject, which had been approved by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and by the school.

Dolor explained there was so much interest, as well as controversy, in New Age topics that it was about time it was studied in some depth. Two years ago, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) came out strongly against New Age beliefs and practices, calling them (rather hastily) an "anti-Christian" movement.

Fresh perspective

On the other hand, certain high ranking liberal-minded Catholic prelates, mainly from Europe, have defended them as nothing more than a fresh perspective on life and spirituality and should not be considered a threat to the Church.

The new course will attempt to explain both sides of the controversy.

Parapsychology is another exciting and controversial subject that is not taught on a regular basis in an institution for higher learning in the Philippines. In fact, the only time the subject was included in any school curriculum was in 1982 when I taught it as an elective course at De La Salle University (DLSU) for the Behavioral Sciences Department.

Only 40 students were normally allowed in each class, but I had more than 50 enrollees. Several faculty members even expressed serious interest in enrolling were they not stopped by the department head.

After one semester, the subject was not offered in the school as I could no longer continue teaching it. I was then working full time in a company and taught the subject only three hours every Saturday. Several years later, the course was revived by my former student, Lane Chua-Garcia, who subsequently obtained her doctorate in Psychology and Counseling from DLSU.

Parapsychology again lost its identity when it was merged under Transpersonal Psychology. The bias against the subject is still very strong among academics.

Origins and explanation

New Age Philosophy and Parapsychology as a new collegiate subject will trace and explain the origins, beliefs and practices of what has come to be known collectively as New Age. It will also deal with the Catholic Church's stand regarding the New Age, as well as arguments for and against it.

The new course introduces parapsychology as a legitimate science that deals with paranormal and spiritual phenomena, as well as the tremendous powers of the human mind. It will consist not only of lectures and discussions, but also scientific experiments, mental exercises and researches in the various fields covered by the course.

Among the exciting topics to be discussed are the CBCP Primer on New Age and major themes of New Age such as astrology, spiritism and channeling, enneagram, Tarot Card, reincarnation, karma, history of parapsychology, methods of research, brain waves, intuition and creativity.

Experiments in telepathy, clairvoyance, psychic diagnosis, remote viewing, telekinesis, psychic reading will be conducted. There will be discussions and demonstrations on holistic healing and alternative therapies such as hypnosis, pranic healing, Edgar Cayce remedies, homeopathy, etc.

Experts in these fields will be invited, including a faith healer, to demonstrate psychic surgery.

Legitimate

Unknown to many people, parapsychology was accepted in 1969 as a legitimate member of the scientific community by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

The voting was very close and there were impassioned arguments raised for and against it. Finally it won acceptance by a small margin mainly due to the strong advocacy by anthropologist Margaret Mead.

Parapsychology, despite many advances in its research methodology, has never been fully accepted by the majority of scientists. The strong bias against it has remained although, with the advent of quantum physics, more and more of parapsychology's major premises are getting support from the laboratories of quantum physicists.

In the Philippines, putting parapsychology in the academe will go a long way in gaining the respectability and acceptance it deserves in the intellectual and scientific community.

Address letters to this column to Prince Plaza I, 106 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806 for information on seminars I conduct. Visit http://www.jlicauco.shorturl.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program 7-8 p.m. every Sunday.

Improper feeding causes 16,000 deaths annually

SENATOR Pia Cayetano, chair of the Senate Committee on Health and Demography, has filed a bill declaring August as Breastfeeding Awareness Month.

Cayetano stressed the need to promote breastfeeding as she cited health statistics showing that some 16,000 infants died every year because of improper nutrition.

The senator warned that the number of infant deaths would continue to rise unless the government moved to discourage the use of infant formula.

Mothers should be made aware that breastmilk was the best source of nutrients for babies, the senator said.

She said improper infant feeding cost the country some P100 million in hospital treatment and medicines every year.

The World Health Organization (WHO) said improper infant feeding practices resulted in 1.2 million episodes of diarrhea, 10 million days of ill health, 450,000 health facility visits and the hospitalization of 36,000 infants.

At the same time, the WHO said breastfed children were smarter by 3-5 IQ points than formula-fed children.

The WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) recommend that infants be breastfed up to two years and beyond.

Cayetano urged President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to make breastfeeding part of the government's poverty alleviation program.

She said only 16 percent of babies were breastfed exclusively. Increasing the rate was critical in achieving the Medium-term Philippines Development Plan (MTPDP) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

The MTPDP aims to reduce infant death rate to 17 per 1,000 live births by 2010 from the current 29 per 1,000, and mortality rate among children under five years old to 32 per 1,000 by 2010 from the current 40 per 1,000.

On the other hand, the MDG aims to reduce the percentage of people with an income of less than $1 a day from 19.1 in 1990 to 9.5 by 2015, and underweight children under five years old from 34.5 in 1990 to 17.2 by 2015.

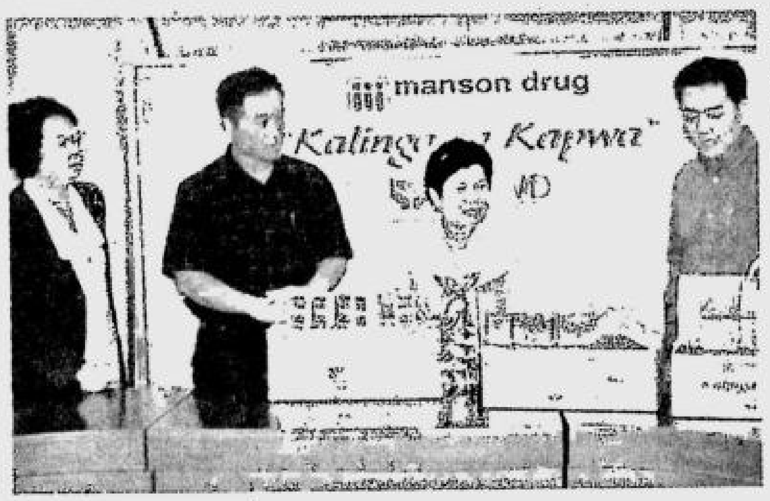
The WHO and Unicef said including breastfeeding in all national and local government development agendas were key to reducing child mortality and child malnutrition.

Cayetano stressed the need to educate mothers about breastfeeding to help reduce the rate of poverty in the country.

She added that unhealthy children meant significant economic losses. Statistics showed that parents lost some P1 billion in wages because they had to attend to sick infants. Hospitalization cost parents about P50 million and the government about P230 million.

Studies also showed that an average household spent P4,000 monthly on infant formula.

Cayetano urged the Department of Health to conduct awareness and educational campaigns on breastfeeding in August, which was also the month when the Breastfeeding Week was marked around the world.



FREE MEDICINES "Kalinga sa Kapwa," an advocacy program of Manson Drug, has provided free medicines worth more than P700,000 to families affected by typhoons in 2004. Signing the Deed of Donation during the ceremonial hand-over of the medicines are (from left) Undersecretary Celia C. Yangco of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Manson Drug president Wilson C. Yao, DSWD Secretary Dinky Juliano-Soliman and Manson Drug marketing head Jay U. Soliman.

Successive pregnancies risky for women

A STUDY by a team headed by Cambridge University Professor Gordon Smith confirms findings that short intervals between pregnancies can cause serious complications.

These include premature deliveries, underweight babies and even infant death.

In view of this, women who have just given birth are advised to use some form of contraception for spacing pregnancies. The Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM), the absence of menstruation while the mother is breastfeeding, can prevent pregnancy for up to six months after delivery, provided it is practiced properly.

Beyond six months, LAM may no longer be as reliable. A back-up birth control method, like hormonal contraception, is needed. When a woman who is breastfeeding wants to use hormonal contraception, an estrogen-free product is advisable.

An estrogen-free ovulation inhibitor oral contraceptive pill is currently available in the market. Obstetrician/gynecologist Dr. Sylvia Santos says women can start taking the pill as early as three to four weeks after delivery. The pill has been found to have no adverse effect on lactation and growth of newborns.

Santos adds women can continue using the estrogen-free pill even after they stop breastfeeding. She underscores the importance of making women aware of small but significant risks of successive pregnancies. She cites reports in the British Medical Journal that complications may occur when women do not allow their bodies enough time to recover from a previous pregnancy.

The estrogen-free pill with 75mcg of desogestrel per tablet is marketed by Organon Philippines, Incorporated. Consult your Ob-Gyne or call 8177638 or text 0917-8523350, or e-mail cerazette@organon.ph.

SAY GOODBYE TO DARK SCAR FOREVER!
[illegible]
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(02) 374420
0927-4022[illegible]

Mag's latest issue is all about men

HealthToday
PHILIPPINES
big thing
male menopause
right thing
28 easy ways
Puppy love
Aga Muhlach

THIS month's issue of HealthToday talks about how to boost your man's immunity with laughter.

By developing a better sense of humor, veteran-nursing educator Anne Belcher says your man can reduce the wear and tear caused by stress, anxiety and frustration and, at the same time, strengthen his immune system's ability to fend off disease.

The magazine also suggests basic skin care routine for men according to age group.

It also tries to answer the question: Is there such a thing as male menopause? It cites recent research revealing what happens when men age. Apart from physical changes such as weight-gain, hair loss, and skin changes, many psychological problems also occur during the so-called male menopause. In middle life, most men have to accept the fact that they will not achieve all the ambitions of their youth. It is at this stage that men need a lot of support from family and friends.

Like most men, Aga Muhlach is trying to come to terms with aging. In the June issue, he reveals his fight with the bulges and also shares a side of him rarely seen on television—a father to his twins.

Read the complete articles in the June issue of HealthToday available in all bookstores, newsstands, and retail outlets nationwide. Call 8860333 local 112 or e-mail enquiry.ph@asia.cmpmedica.com.

Most dangerous fat

From page C1

surface.

Experimental

The "omentum operation" is an experimental surgery that is the opposite of liposuction. It has no cosmetic benefits because it does not remove fat under the skin but it may have health benefits because it removes a flap of deep abdominal fat called the omentum.

The omentum makes up about one-third of visceral fat and is relatively easy to remove. The rest of visceral fat is deeply embedded in the abdominal cavity and is difficult to remove surgically, according to the surgeons involved in this experimental procedure.

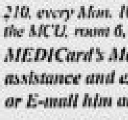
So far, only four patients have undergone the operation at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. A larger study is being planned.

Eat a lot, exercise a lot

A Japanese study found that sumo wrestlers had normal levels of cholesterol, triglycerides and blood sugar in spite of their large size and voluminous rolls of fat.

That's because they don't have much visceral fat due to several hours of daily exercise. Thus, sumo wrestlers have a lower incidence of type-2 diabetes compared to sedentary obese people. This led Dr. Glenn Gaesser, author of "Big Fat Lies," to note, "The moral seems to be: If you're going to eat a lot, then exercise a lot, too."

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info.



MEDICard, The Healthcare I Deserve!

What diseases commonly affect the kidneys?

Take Charge Doc!

Kidney diseases are a leading health problem among Asians and also to millions of people around the world.

Infection is the most common disorder that afflicts the kidneys and the urinary tract. People with difficulty in the urine flow are more susceptible in getting a UTI (urinary tract infection) because any abnormality that obstructs the flow of urine sets the stage for an infection.

Glomerulonephritis or inflammation of the small vessels in the nephrons (the active unit of excretion in the kidney) affects the cleansing system of the organ. The glomeruli are the tiny filters of the kidney that selectively allow passage of the body's waste products from the blood into the urine while preventing the passage of protein and red blood cells into the urine.

A person who has diabetes has a higher risk of getting a UTI because of changes in the immune system. Any disorder that suppresses the immune system raises the risk of getting an infection. It also causes injuries to the glomeruli and the patient may start retaining water and develop *edema* (excessive accumulation of fluid in the body tissues). Diabetes also causes damage to the nerves controlling the function of the urinary bladder which may result in difficulty in emptying the bladder and frequent urinary tract infection and cause kidney scarring.

He may also develop hypertension which eventually will cause damage to the small arteries in the kidney. Eventually, the patient may develop kidney failure and will require dialysis.

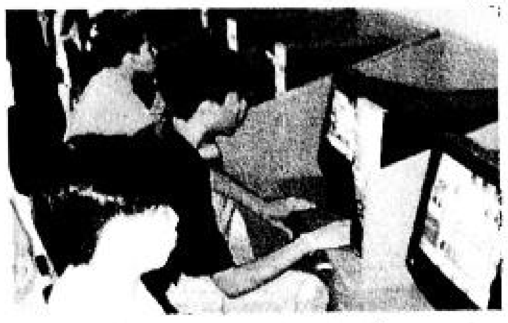
This week's answer to our feature question on the diseases that commonly affect the kidneys was provided by our Medical service provider from World Citi Medical Center and Manila Central University-Filemon D. Tanchoco Foundation, Inc., Dr. Sandra Cheng del Mundo.

Dr. del Mundo specializes in Internal Medicine-Nephrology. She earned her degree in Medicine from the University of Santo Tomas in 1995. She later had her residency training for a specialization in Internal Medicine at the Manila Doctors Hospital and became a fellow in 2004 Nephrology at the Philippine General Hospital. She is affiliated with the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine Society of Nephrology. MEDICard members may visit her for consultation at the WCMC, room 210, every Mon. 10am - 3pm and Wed., Fri. and Sat. at 1pm - 3pm, or at the MCU, room 6, every Tue. Wed. Fri. & Sat., 9 - 11 am.

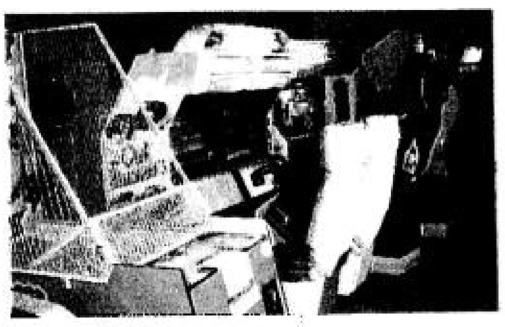
MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

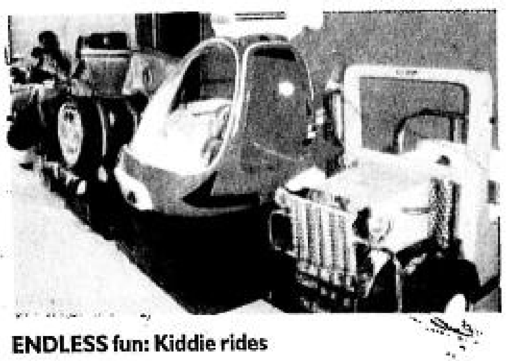
Nicky

MEDICard PHILIPPINES, INC. 9th floor Sagittarius Building H.V. dela Costa Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City 1227 Trunkline: 867-2020 Fax No.: 894-5720, 810-3855 Text: Key in MEDICARD and send to 2344 (Globe & Touch Mobile) or 4627 (Smart & Talk N' Text) E-mail: inquiry@medicardphils.com Website: www.medicardphils.com


TOTAL fun with G-Box's Network games

GOODIES at the Redemption Booth


SIMULATORS for your pleasure


ENDLESS fun: Kiddie rides

RENOWNED architect Alfonso Locsin , with wife Marilen and sons Chipper and Mano

ILOILO'S hot namedroppables: Joemarie Agriam and Abu Jacinto

GOOD-LOOKING singer Mark Herras, with the Magazine Sixty Dancers, rocked Robinsons Place.

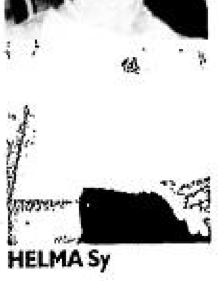
Iloilo gets 'boxed' in

PANAY News society columnist John Castigador

MARKETING Director Andy Arevalo

MEGA PR and party organizer Nonoy Ybiernas

ILOILO socialite and dancing queen Susan Wang


HELMA Sy

G-BOX OPENING: Iloilo City's dynamic Mayor Jerry Treñas with SP member Armand Parcon, Steven Haw, *moi*, owner Jimmy Co, Robinsons' Ditas Taleon and Fr. Salty de la Rama

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

MOI had just jetted back in town after a weekend in Bacolod and, before I could bat an eyelash, I was off again in one of Cebu Pacific's flights—on time as usual—to Iloilo to snip the ribbon for the opening of the latest super fab happening place for all ages.

Simply called G-Box, *palanggas,* the biggest amusement center in the country is located where all the action is taking place, Robinsons Place Iloilo, natch! This one-of-a-kind fun place has state-of-the-art equipment and facilities. Its grand opening was graced by hotshots in business, politics and society.

Promptly at 11 a.m., I had the honor to share with Metro Iloilo's man on the move, the dynamic beloved mayor, Honorable **Jerry Treñas**, the task of snipping the ceremonial ribbon. Within arm's length were the hotshots and brains behind G-Box, like its super nice owner, business magnate **Jimmy Co**; marketing director, cyber smart **Andy Arevalo**; operations manager **Steven Haw** and ace marketing consultant **Abu Jacinto.**

A drum and bugle corps set the pace, its music reverberating across the mall. Naturellement, making sure that everything was as "smooth as silk" was Robinsons Place Iloilo mega dynamic manager, always smiling **Ditas Luzurriaga-Taleon** and her rah-rah staff—**Don Protasio** (in an eye-catching Dolce & Gabbana blazer), **Ivy Salcedo, Clyde Clavero** and **Rofel John Parreño** who welcomed the chosen invitees *palanggas*, like Metro Iloilo's top society columnist **John B. Castigador** of Panay News; top party organizer and PR man, **Nonoy Ybiernas;** renowned architect **Alfonso Locsin** , who arrived with his wife, **Marilen Montinola-Locsin** and their tall, macho sons **Mano** and **Chipper;** Iloilo Councilor **Armand Parcon;** DTI Regional Director **Dominic Abad** and his lady love, **Emy; Joemarie Agriam** of Cream Magazine, plus other like them too beautiful to mention.

Rev. Fr. **Salty de la Rama, S.J.,** of Ateneo de Iloilo led the prayers and did the blessings. Mayor Jerry Treñas spoke of the growing economy of the city.

The 2,000-sqm establishment, a cool, action-packed place, is the most complete, modern, expensive and extensive family amusement and entertainment center.

The huge and fully airconditioned place has over 250 assorted video arcade machines, redemption games, kiddie rides, simulator games, 11 state-of-the-art videoke rooms, 10 network Internet gaming machines; two center stage areas, and a redemption booth with the widest selection of merchandise and prizes.

A yummy lunch at an adjacent space, courtesy of culinary wizard **Wilson Esparancilla,** was served after the formalities.

Later in the afternoon, upcoming recording artists pretty-pretty **Jennelyn Mercado** and good-looker **Mark Herras,** and in-demand dance group Magazine Sixty Dancers, plus games and raffles, had Robinsons rocking. The mob cheered and applauded like forever.

According to **Andy Arevalo,** more attractions are underway like the all-time child and, I must say, adult favorite, bump cars and a carousel.

G-Box, *palanggas,* is definitely an awesome entertainment and amusement alternative for kids and adults! It is where total fun begins!

Fashionable brides

The annual Wedding Rituals at the place for anything and everything fashionable, the popular Robinsons Place Iloilo (RPI), is getting bigger and better! Now on its fourth year, it showcased the best Iloilo can offer for those walking down the aisle. The bright guys of RPI pulled all the stops to make the event a success, assembling at the fountain area top providers of wedding service and supplies like designers, hotels and restaurants, jewelry and accessories, wines, photographs and videos, giveaways and souvenirs, floral arrangements and bouquets, even honeymoon and tours.

The nine-day bridal fair opened with a fashion extravaganza featuring creations of top local haute couturiers and international award-winning fashion designer, **Frederick Peralta,** an Ilonggo. The fountain area was abloom with flowers and foliage, a perfect setting for the yearly affair, *palanggas*.

Local designers impressed with their designs, creativity and craftsmanship.

With the heavenly voices of the University of San Agustin Troubadours as musical background, Frederick Peralta unveiled his 13-piece collection of Oriental Neo-Filipino, Kahirup, Mid-Eastern inspirations. From simple to highly embellished and fully accessorized pieces, the collection came off as polished and clean. This coming home of one of Iloilo's own was something we can truly be proud of!

Modeling his collection were campus Fashionista 2005 winners and Ms Robinsons-Visayas 2004, Clyde Clavero.

The indefatigable Ditas was here, there and everywhere despite a recent bout with flu, making sure the show ran smoothly. It did, *palanggas.*

Front row fashion watchers, were society columnist John B. Castigador of Panay News; top party organizer Nonoy Ybiernas; Iloilo's dancing queen, **Susan Wang**;. fashionable dresser **Helma Sy**; woman of style **Pauline Gorriceta-Banusing**; fashion designer **Eric delos Santos;** florist **Robert Blancaflor,** who did the show's floral centerpiece; accessory designer **Khuy Haresco;** socialite **Alice Javellana;** and members of Iloilo's society set like **Glenda Jardeleza-Uy; Genie Guadarrama-Bionat; Jean Jalandoni-Gustilo** and **Charrie Lui.**

Three days later, the fourth Annual Wedding Rituals opened at Robinsons Place Iloilo, natch, providing inspiration for weddings to remember, *palanggas.*

Ditas Luzurriaga-Taleon, told us, "We will outdo this year's Wedding Rituals with next year's!" Well, a promise made is a promise kept, especially coming from Robinsons' top secret weapon, *palanggas.*

"This is where dreams come true," a future bride told **Khuy Haresco** of **Ichi Pichim** as she tried on some of the accessories on display.

A little birdie told *moi* this Wedding Rituals would be brought to Robinsons Place Cebu. Not bad, huh?

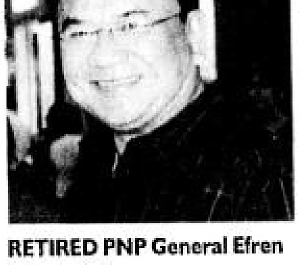
In the meantime, here comes the bride, *palanggas.*

WEDDING gown by Frederick Peralta

BO Parcon and his model

RPI Mall manager Ditas Luzurriaga-Taleon, *moi*, Frederick Peralta and group manager of Robinsons for Western Visayas Joseph Sian

SOCIALITES in a row: Glenda Jardeleza-Uy, Genie Guadarrama-Bionat, vivacious Jean Jalandoni-Gustilo and Charrie Lui


RETIRED PNP General Efren Fernandez

AL dente Ristorante Italiano